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AINSWORTH'S MAGAZINE.

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

XXXVI.

PHILIP was no longer under the necessity of disappointing his court by again deferring the long-expected ceremony of knighting his sons. The ceremony was of more importance than may be supposed. The princes had worn squires' robes for a longer period than was usual for persons of their exalted birth. They had all three become husbands and fathers, and accident might at any time call one of them to the throne, or to head an army, when the want of their spurs would prove a serious obstacle. And to confer the honour of knighthood upon them without ostentation would be to curtail their honour, and a want of observance of the rules of chivalry. All wise sovereigns, moreover, feeling that the respect they pay to themselves is the best landmark whereby to regulate the homage which others are bound to pay them, and knowing that man's imagination is captivated by the rainbow tints of pomp and splendour, have ever shown themselves alive to the policy of investing trifling occurrences in their own life with importance.

Philip was as truly imbued with this principle as any prince need be. He had, indeed, too often indulged it at the expense of other and sounder principles. His taste for lavish expenditure being constantly checked by the emptiness of his coffers, he as constantly sought to replenish them by various acts of flagrant injustice and oppression. With a genius equal to great enterprises, his whole reign may be said to have been but a long struggle to fill an ever-exhausted exchequer, which resembled the charmed tub of Danae's daughters. As we have seen, the wealth of the Templars, from the day on which he saw their treasures pass under his palace windows, had haunted his imagination and tempted him beyond his powers of resistance. His necessities were urgent—these treasures lay within his grasp; and being seldom troubled with scruples of any kind when a desire, however lawless, took possession of him—and had he known such, Enguerrand de Marigny, his familiar, was ever at hand to remove them—he determined to seize them cost what it would.

The first act of the drama was successfully played out. But before seeing how he employed his booty, it were, perhaps, as well to cast a glance at the machinations which had enabled him to possess himself of it.

Clement V., by birth a Frenchman, was elevated to the papal chair by the intrigues, and maintained there by the victorious arms, of France. He was, therefore, but the king's creature—a mere tool in his hands. Yet all-complying, as Philip had ever found him on most occasions, the Pope was not altogether so blind to his own interests as not to feel the greatest repugnance to Philip's design against the Templars. The measure was peculiarly obnoxious to him. First, the abolition of any religious order, especially at the bidding of a lay prince, was prejudicial to the ecclesiastical power. Secondly, this Order in particular, so strong in its resources and numerous ramifications, might be considered as a clerical standing army wholly at his command; and, lastly, such a pusillanimous concession of the Church's rights, and so great an injustice against an innocent community, would excite the wonder and hatred of his contemporaries and the contempt of unborn generations.

Clement, therefore, hesitated; but, won over by fair promises and terrified by threats, he yielded at last a reluctant consent, on condition that the Church should share in the spoil. This point being conceded, Philip sounded the other European princes; most of whom felt very little interest in a question touching a body of men scarcely in any way connected with their interests. Edward of England, and a few more bound by alliance or affinity to the French king, eagerly seconded his wishes; and all more or less somewhat relished the notion of enriching themselves at so easy a rate. The way being thus prepared, pretences were sought to justify the deed, and steps taken to surprise the Templars, so that they should have no time to concert measures whereby to oppose a formidable resistance to the different governments.

In all associations of men, however pure the principles on which they are based and inoffensive the general tenor of their acts, in proportion to the numbers they embrace the vices, follies, and crimes which float about the world at large will be there represented. A foundation on which to raise a superstructure of calumny will not be wanting—it requires but a slight effort of malignant ingenuity to generalise particular offences, and make a whole body tainted with, and answerable for, the guilt of a few of its members. That the Templars had their own black sheep, like every other community, cannot be doubted. They had even their own broad and general defects. Their indomitable pride made them objects of fear and dislike—they were intemperate to a proverb; but the vile aspersions and, in so many instances, ludicrous charges brought against them, only testify to the grossness, ignorance, and injustice of the princes who could attack them on such irrational and impure grounds. As to the facility with which, almost everywhere, their strongholds were taken, it can only be accounted for by the supposition that in other countries the Templars were as unsuspicious and unprepared as Jaques Molay was in his preceptory at Paris. Nowhere did they attempt resistance but in the Rhine provinces; where their desperate, though fruitless efforts, under the Wildgraf Frederic of Hesse, bore witness at least to the valour which was their chief, if not their only merit, and showed that had they been prepared for the blow aimed at them their conquest would have been no easy matter.

Having now ample means at his disposal, Philip determined to invest the approaching ceremony with such splendour as should impress his liege barons with a salutary notion of his power. He summoned them

from all parts of his kingdom; and as the time appointed drew near baronial trains covered the roads leading to the capital. Foreign princes came from all parts. Edward of England and Isabel, his wife, entered Paris on the eve of the day fixed upon for opening the *Cour Plenière*, accompanied by a large suite of nobles, and took possession of their apartments in the palace.

The morrow dawned with a cloudless sky and bright sunshine, which was very satisfactory to the thousands who with anxious eyes watched its approach. It is unnecessary to say how the princes went in state to mass —then to the bath, and in what manner they were initiated in the devoirs of knighthood—the ceremony is known to all. It is, however, a matter of no small interest to the inquirer into the spirit of past times to observe that this ceremony was a sacrament apparently of paramount consideration even to marriage; the spurs being often conferred at the altar, whilst the nuptial bond, even for persons of the highest rank, could only be performed beneath the church porch. Such details as these convey, perhaps, a better notion of the order of chivalry than the most accurate description of mere ceremonial.

We will not, therefore, weary our reader with the many changes of raiment, from grey robes to azure, crimson and ermine, nor with a description of the princes' fair spouses casting their silver veils and tissues to assume golden ones, and seeming, as every pretty woman needs must, with every fresh caprice of toilet, prettier still for the change. We will not depict Philip's emotion—for his stern, even cruel nature was capable of such—when with his own hand he conferred on his three sons the great honour of the day, and glancing from them and their lovely young wives to the assembled spectators, he seemed to say:

"Behold the pillars of my race, and in them a fair promise that it will long flourish in these lands. Behold my noble sons! which among my barons owns prouder scions? Look at my daughters! what a heritage of grace and noble blood flows in their veins! If I plough the rich fields of France for my own good there will be those after me worthy of the reaping!"

The royal dinner during *Cour Plenières* usually took place in the palace-yard, when the public was allowed to stream in and feast their eyes on the grand officers of the household surrounding the royal table, all mounted and armed, ready for a charge upon the king's lieges if need were. But this day the banquet was held in the grand hall, which occupied the site of what is now called the *Salle des pas perdus*, whose avenues were thronged by a motley crowd vomited forth from all the purlieus of Paris, eager to see how the king wore his crown at his meals and entertained his guests.

But though the mendicant in his rags mingled with feudal pomp on great occasions in those days, not all the wealth, the lavish expenditure, the artistic decorations of modern times, nor the refinement that lends grace to modern manners, can convey any idea of the power which, like a halo, then surrounded and magnified greatness. The humble shrubbery might as well be thought to vie with the primeval forest of America —the fancy Kiosk to compete with the marble structures of ancient Rome, as the great of our day to emulate the greatness of their ancestors. They are but the shadow to the substance—the echo to the sound.

At the head of a long table, at which were all the princes and principal guests, sat the King of France. The jewelled crown, the azure robe broidered with golden lilies, the ermine mantle set off his haughty features and commanding form; but what more than all else rivetted attention was the unflinching resolution which characterised his well-shaped mouth and flashed in his keen eye. A father's pride, too, lighted up his countenance without softening its severe outlines: none could look upon him that day without acknowledging that the royalty of nature was his birthright.

Something of his lineaments might have been observed in his daughter Isabel of England, who sat at his right hand, a small golden crown harmonising with her abundant fair tresses, which her long veil was so adjusted to set off to the best advantage, and her ample robe, broidered with the arms of England, adding majesty to her fine form. Philip ever and anon cast upon this his favourite child looks of pride and affection. In her physiognomy he could behold the features that had been applauded in him softened by womanly grace; and had he been philosophical enough to seek tokens of an evil spirit in an angelic form, he might have found there something, too, that spoke of his own proud vindictive temper.

On his left hand sat Marguerite, his eldest son's wife, her golden veil gathered close round her face, near whom sat the Princess Jeanne, cold and silent. The arms of Burgundy and Artois quartering the golden lilies of France, glittered on her robe and proclaimed her titles and pretensions. Still she seemed to the spectators the most unassuming there present. But if caution sealed her lips, as well as those of the Queen of Navarre, and checked their roving glances, vain were their admonitory looks at Blanche, whose cheeks glowed and whose eyes languished and danced with every passing sensation.

Never had the royal house of France reunited around the festive board fairer offshoots or more full of promise, and never had a nobler train swelled its state. There sat the King of England in his double quality of son-in-law and vassal; and at as many tables as the hall could conveniently contain, the haughty barons of his realm mingled with the no less powerful feudatories of France.

Well might the monarch's proud heart swell with exultation, nor could he deem, in that hour, how vain were these fair seemings—how fallacious these earth-born hopes!—that he had toiled, and plotted, and charged his soul with crime fruitlessly; and that in a few short troubled years his crown would pass away from his heirless sons, and that his name would be mentioned, in after times, as belonging to a dynasty that had been. He thought not of this as he resolved in his mind the expediency of fresh crimes whereby to secure to his line the advantages he had gained. But had he possessed the skill of deducing grave events from trifling causes, or of discovering in the countenance indices of the mind, even on this his day of triumph and of joy, "coming evils would have cast their shadows before;" nor was it destined to close without a cloud.

Only the experienced mariner knows of what significance is the light breeze often the precursor of a storm; and only the well versed in life's lore can read the play of human passion in the slight tokens of passing or suppressed emotion. But could even such a one have guessed, as Edward's lovely partner returned his cold, almost dark look, with a sidelong

glance of determined hate and scorn, that a bloody grave yawned between them—that crime, like a venomous flower from a splendid vase, would spring up from the love that lent the queen and the gallant Mortimer such radiant glow as they exchanged the melting gaze and the fond smile of an ardent though guilty passion? Could he have guessed, beneath Jeanne of Burgundy's drooping lid and quick shifting glance, the traditional horrors of the Tower of Nesles, of which she became a few years later the heroine? Perhaps these details may not have been conjectured; but vice is ever the broad road to crime, at whatever sideway house the traveller may stop. It would, indeed, have required less skill to divine hatred lurking beneath Louis the Hutin's dark brows as he bent them upon his consort; or careless contempt on Charles the Handsome's curled lips whenever his eyes lighted, perchance, on the child-like Blanche. There was, too, as much hollowness in the grave smiles and courtesies that passed betwixt the Kings of England and France as ever existed in the passing fits of kindness betwixt the rival nations of which they were for the time being the representatives.

Such dishes as the culinary art then knew, and *gourmands* approved, followed in quick succession to the sound of flute and hautboys, until the peacock, decked out with all the splendours of his plumage, was brought in on a dish of gold and deposited before the king; quantities of plovers, pheasants, partridges, and other birds, basted with rose-water, accompanying the royal bird, of which royalty and a few especial favourites alone partook. Each course was eagerly followed by the eyes of the curious gazers who stood outside the hall in picturesque groups, stretching their necks to catch a peep at this or that great personage, the object of their curiosity, or to admire the quantity of good things which would, probably, a few hours later, contribute to their own enjoyment.

The *entremets*—a species of interlude to divert attention from the tediousness of protracted repasts—was soon ushered in to a loud crash of music. It consisted of a huge ship filled with crusaders, having the banner of Godefroy of Bouillon on the poop. As this cumbrous machine was wheeled into the hall and directed towards a clumsy structure representing a castle with its towers, battlements, and Saracen defenders, loud acclamations burst from the spectators. The knights landed, stormed the fort, and, after a desperate onslaught, to the great pleasure and admiration even of the king himself, completed a triumphant escalade.

While this ponderous device engaged the attention of Philip and his guests, the Princesses Marguerite and Blanche, in spite of Jeanne's warning glances, ventured to exchange a few words with Philip and Gaultier d'Aulnoy, who, the one in his new purple squire's robe, the other in his gay azure page's garb, stood behind their respective mistresses. No less elated than Blanche herself was with this unwonted excitement, Gaultier exchanged smiles and meaning looks with the young princess, heedless of the observant eyes of the grand officers about the royal board. Behind the king's dais stood, with stern decorum, a group of men known for their wisdom in the council and their bravery in war: Adam Comte de Meulan, *Grand Pannetier*—Raoul d'Hespin, *Porte Oriflamme*—Guy de St. Paul, *Grand Bouteiller*—Thibaud de Chepoy, *Grand Maitre des Arbaletriers*—the *Grand Echanson*, and among them, in his quality

of chamberlain, the all-powerful favourite Enguerrand de Marigny, and, a no less important personage in his way, the king's jester. These were a formidable array of prying eyes; but there were others, still more dangerous, bent on the thoughtless pair from another quarter, yet they heeded not the gathering cloud.

"Look at our Princess Blanche! how the free graces of the Queen of England mislead her!" observed Dame Catherine, one of a group of ladies attached to the royal household assembled at the upper end of the hall.

"Yes, Dame Catherine—she forgets that Prince Charles is not so indulgent as that poor King of England seems to be, and that his eye is on her with anything but a placable look," was the reply of an antiquated dame who had been attached to the person of the late queen, and was now in the service of the princesses.

"She is such a mere child!" observed Dame Catherine. "I don't think there's any real harm about her—but so giddy—so thoughtlesss—so carried away by the feeling of the moment, and I fear so easily influenced by bad example."

"Queen Isabel will afford her plenty of that if she remain here long," retorted the other dame, endeavouring to adjust the rebellious folds of her robe stiff with the embroidered arms of her illustrious house.

"Yes, Countess d'Esclavoles—so will the Princess Jeanne, for all that she looks so demure . . . ."

"At present," put in another matron of portentous aspect—"but her ferret-like eyes and thin, colourless lips betoken no good."

"I am bound to own she does not resemble our sainted mistress the late queen, God assoilize her soul!" responded the countess, piously crossing herself.

"See how the Princess Blanche and Queen Isabel give all the delicate viands they but look at to be devoured by their favourites!" said, with a look of envy and discontent, the high and puissant Dame Emeraude Clermont de Nesles, wife to the Connetable. "When our late queen sat at this board, she sent me a plateful of the daintiest delicacies, saying, 'Carry this to my dear Dame Emeraude!'—she had manners at least."

In truth the Princess Blanche, though borne out by the custom of the times, was at that moment carrying her condescension beyond the limits usually observed.

"My mignon," she said to her young page, "take this plate of peacock from before me, it is very fine and fit for a gentle page like thee to feed on—it will give thee a princely and dainty taste."

"Shall I not, sweet lady, offer it to one of yonder old crones in your name?" replied Gaultier, at last perceiving the looks bent on him from the upper end of the hall. "See, with what earnestness they gaze at us! —Shall I carry the dish to your own Dame Catherine, or the Countess Esclavoles, or, better still, to the lady of the Grand Echanson?—they seem to expect some such message."

"Why do not Marguerite or Jeanne think of doing so?—Why should I? No—eat it thyself, mignon. Those ladies are too cross—they deserve no favour or encouragement."

"But we are observed, lady."

"Look at Isabel and Mortimer—who observes them? This is the second time, too, that Marguerite has whispered to your brother, and who seems to care? Pshaw! thou foolish page, enjoy thy peacock and thy lady's smiles, and be not afraid, or thou wilt never win, or be worthy to wear thy spurs."

"And so, Sir Squire," said the Princess Marguerite, with a look of lively interest, but lowering her voice so that it might be inaudible to all but Philip d'Aulnoy, "you have not been able to get speech of your brother the Templar?"

"No, madam," he replied, in the same tone, "I must have named myself, and to claim our relationship openly now were too perilous."

"He is, then, desolate—hopeless—friendless," pursued Marguerite.

"No one," said the squire, "can gain access to him. I have tried in vain several times to do so. A maiden of low degree—I think the same you deigned to question some time since concerning that letter—spends whole days sitting on a stone before his prison; her tearless despair might soften even the hearts of his gaolers."

"Quite a subject for a ballad," said the princess smiling.

"Gracious lady," said the squire, hurriedly—"cease, I pray you, to talk to me thus kindly—glances are darted this way from all quarters."

"Well, take this plate with its contents—it may serve as an excuse for my having one minute forgotten the tedious state that surrounds us here."

"That state is a duty," whispered D'Aulnoy's conscience, but he dared not give the thought vent, and accepted with silent reverence the undesired honour thus imprudently vouchsafed him.

Ewers were now handed round for ablution, which was then as necessary after repasts as it is now at Constantinople. When the royal and noble fingers were duly purified from contact with the various viands, dried fruits, sweetmeats, comfits, &c., were handed round, and again the Princess Blanche, imitating the example of Queen Isabel, with sparkling eyes and smiling lip, every instant gave some from her own plate to her page, never omitting to whisper in his ear as he leant forward to receive them, his boyish vanity bordering on insolence at so much distinction, whilst the dames at the further end of the hall looked on with indignation. But Isabel of England had her observers too.

"What charming spirits the queen is in to-day," observed a nobleman in the ear of King Edward, as he leant with unreproved familiarity over the back of his chair.

"Charming!" replied Edward; "but then this dinner is so magnificent—such superb rocks and castles of comfits I never saw!—such battlements—such glorious ships of sugar floating in such delicious creams and jellies! Only I think the sea should not be pink, should it, Gaveston? or taste sweet, eh?—what think you, Seymour?"

"Methinks the queen is very good to permit Mortimer to hang over her chair in so marked a manner," answered the favourite, with a scornful lip.

"Methinks," answered the king, smiling good-naturedly; "I am very good to let you hang over mine. Come, don't look savage, man, but let the queen alone—as I do," he added, laughing: his fawning favourites laughed too.

To recompense their ingenuous fit of cachinnation, the bountiful monarch gave each a handful of sugar-plums, saying, "There, there, my good fellows—tell me if they are sweet enough for me."

"Has it never struck you," said an English knight to another in the rear of Edward's dais, "that the names of Isabel and Jezabel have some affinity—perhaps the same origin?"

"How so, Le Jay?"

"Why, as I look at Queen Isabel an old story about a Queen Jezabel comes into my head—it was told me by my uncle the Abbot of . . . ."

"Abbot! why your uncle is a Templar!"

"Hush! never name that word—there are no Templars now, you know—but my uncle Brian told me . . ."

"Well, let him be or say what he will, Queen Isabel is lovely!"

"But not wise—was there ever anything so unblushing as her dalliance with that proud Mortimer?"

"Silence, man!—will you that the proud Mortimer and the queen have your words reported to them?"

"I care not if they be—I must have some further discourse about these puissant lovers, come of it what may."

"I understand—with the king—but no more at present on that subject, as you value your life."

"Truly, I like not this fashion of bestowing comfits and other nice things at dinner," observed King Philip's jester, with the licence of his kind.

"How so, Master Malapert? why should such a general custom incur your displeasure?" said Philip.

"First, sire, because I get none."

"Do you like them, then?" asked the king, negligently.

"Not particularly," replied the jester, with a malicious leer—"but to receive them is a mark of favour; and to receive no favour marks one out as an ill-favoured dog, that's not deserving of favour, and therefore must do without it."

"I will prove you worthy a mark of favour, Sir Jester," interposed the Princess Jeanne—"you would, doubtless, prize it more from a more august hand, but that is not my fault," and she looked earnestly at the jester as she handed him the comfits.

"Well—art content, ape?" said the king good-humouredly, for never had his heart been more glad than now, and he was willing to indulge the licence of the hour.

The jester shook his head. "No—no," he muttered, disdainfully toying with the sweetmeats, instead of devouring them with the eager haste enjoined by etiquette, in proof of being sensible of the honour conferred. "No, I am not satisfied. Sweets are of various kinds and disposed for divers purposes. To some they are given to glue their lips—to others they are a reward—to others again a promise—to which category does this sugar-plum belong? Now look, sire—isn't it a pleasant sight? Here's the fair Queen of England giving some to the most brilliant knight in her train—there's King Edward giving some to Le Spencer and Gaveston—the Queen of Navarre to her handsome squire—the Princess Blanche to her pretty page—what a dainty, discriminating choice!—none but the well-favoured deserve favour—now I put it to you,

sire, if I am worthy of it?" and the knave squinted frightfully at his master.

The king's eye mechanically followed the directions indicated by the mischievous jester; and it fell on each graceful favourite in turn as he leisurely enjoyed the honour thus publicly conferred on him. There was nothing extraordinary or unusual in the circumstance itself; comfits being, at that time, articles of such luxury that it was a common usage with the great to distribute them after the repast among those of their followers or favourites whom they might wish to distinguish. Philip, therefore, had seen them bestowed around him without attaching any importance to the fact—nay, he had himself complied with a custom so general. But a word, an insinuation may in an instant change the whole aspect of things, as though we observed them from another elevation; and the king's suspicious temper readily took the alarm.

"Strange!" he muttered.

The fool caught the faint sound as the king's lips rather formed than gave it utterance.

"No—it is not strange," he said; "he who can at times give more, can also give less, as the song says."

"What song?" the king asked.

"That about the happy lovers—shall I sing it to you, fair king?"

"Peace, fool!" said Philip, sternly; "eat thy sweetmeat in silence."

The chidden jester shrunk back for a moment, awed by his master's clouded aspect, but soon resumed:

"Our newly-made knights don't bear their young spurs with much pride—are they longing too for sweetmeats? What think you, sire?"

The king darted an anxious gaze at his sons, then suddenly motioned the Grand Bouteiller close to him.

"Guy de St. Paul," he said, in a hoarse whisper; "I know you to be hard as stone, but true as gold—nearer—your head close to mine, man—a snake has been hissing in my ear these few minutes past—tell me—take no time for thought—what is said of the ladies of my house?—Quick—don't hesitate."

"The three Burgundian princesses, sire?"

"Ay."

"No good, I am forced to admit."

"That means evil—I understand. And you—what say you, Guy?—don't reflect—speak at once."

"If they were my daughters, sire," answered the old noble, bluntly, "the lowest dungeon in my castle were scarce deep enough for them."

The king's countenance fell. His whispered colloquy with Guy de St. Paul was unnoticed by his guests; but Jeanne of Burgundy's keen eye did not fail to mark the sudden cloud that came over him as he listened. In truth, his aspect was wholly different from what it had been a moment before. She could not say wherein the change consisted, but the expression that had illumined his countenance during the day was gone. His features assumed a stony rigidity—he bent his head on his breast like one who yields to a sudden shock, but righted almost instantaneously. Perhaps he yet disbelieved—he still hoped—perhaps he could not immediately encompass truths so humiliating to his pride, so fraught with disaster to his house and lineage; but Jeanne felt that she, and

perhaps her sisters, too, were lost. She remembered that she, at least, was an heiress—that to relinquish her were also to relinquish the fair counties which she alone could annex to the French crown. Still her brain swam—she leant back in her chair in a sort of trance, when a low voice in her ear recalled her to herself. It was the dreaded Philip who spoke; but softly as he did so his words sounded like the blast of a trumpet.

"Fair daughter," said he, "you look scared—have you seen the accuser's handwriting on the wall?"

"The heat—the noise—the unusual excitement," Jeanne could proceed no further, for, her eyes turning upon her father-in-law, she saw, playing round his mouth, that strange smile which betokened mischief at work within his breast. As she marked it her courage wholly deserted her—her head fell heavily on her shoulder, and she relapsed into the partial swoon from which she had just been roused.

The king, not choosing to attract attention towards her, suffered his looks to wander round the board; but as his eye now rested on his son Charles's cold look, anon on Louis's cloudy brow, and then, with a stealthy inquiry, sought their youthful brides, that peculiar smile again settled on his lips. He remembered that his jester had included the Queen Isabel in his caustic strictures; but in her, he thought, his love and his pride were safely anchored. He turned to examine her with more attention than he had done heretofore, and the false smile left his lip. But it chanced at that moment that she was in the act of conveying to Lord Mortimer a dried plum with so eloquent a look, and he received it with so much rapture, that, little versed in gallantry as Philip—though the handsomest man of his day—really was, he could not be blind to what he then beheld. Conviction like an arrow shot through him; and, for the first time perhaps, he experienced what a hard nature can be made to feel.

He became so abstracted as scarcely to be conscious of what was passing around him, and something glistened in his eye—not a tear—but something nearer to it than his flinty nature had ever known before. With a strong effort he shook off this unwonted emotion, just as Jeanne, recovering herself, looked round to see if her weakness had been noticed.

"Compose yourself," he whispered in her ear; "take heed lest you attract observation;" but though he spoke so low, there was something in his voice that well nigh frightened her out of all power of self-control. The king next, inclining his head towards the blooming copy of himself that sat on his other hand, gently murmured:

"Let my fair lily of France beware of sullying her glory, for her father's sake;" then he added, in a more hurried tone; "for your own sake, Isabel, beware! Were I in yon fool's place, how long think you should that popinjay's head, or yours either, soar so high? Beware, I say."

To the deep blush that overspread the queen's neck and forehead at the king's words, succeeded a sudden paller; and it was surprising how like her father she looked as she replied:

"My fair fame, sire, is safe in my own keeping, and my life too, even though carrion crows were suddenly to turn hawks."

"Truly," said Philip, his smile again returning; "I never knew what

a happy and proud father I was till now. May my son Edward be as long before he discovers all the blessings he enjoys."

The Princess Jeanne, her eyes lighting on her plate, all at once bethought herself of what was so evidently expected of her; and charging page and squire with message upon message, in great measure dispelled the cloud that had overcast the ladies' countenances. Her example was followed by the Queen of Navarre—scarce less agitated than herself by what had occurred—who, being the wife of their future sovereign, and consequently, in their eyes, the first princess present, had doubly mortified her attendants by her previous neglect.

At last the king, who, like his fair neighbours, had for some time past with difficulty maintained an outward show of composure, gave the signal for retiring; when those who had hitherto looked wistfully on discussed the fragments of the royal banquet, which, after repeated attacks from all the officers and menials of the household, according to their rank and place, was still abundant enough to afford a joyous meal to the spectators in the outer court, who threw themselves voraciously on what remained, a privilege granted them on such occasions.

Philip being now under the influence of sentiments and circumstances which he would fain conceal—for the entertainment which had cost him so dear must not be disturbed with family quarrels, and strangers must depart from his court with none but favourable impressions of it—determined to remain satisfied for the present with a careful scrutiny of his daughters-in-law's conduct; whereby, he thought, it would be easy for him to discover their guilt or establish their innocence. Wisdom prompted him thus far; but his heart bled and his pride was humbled at the recollection of what that day had revealed to him beneath his own roof and at his own board.

Jeanne of Burgundy's eyes closed not that night. She spent it in canvassing the impressions which the banquet had left on her mind, and a strange, though not unfrequent, result attended her efforts at recalling all that had passed—becoming convinced she had been fooled by the workings of her own fancy. The danger which, by a mysterious magnetic influence, she had felt to be impending, now she examined it with the light of reason, seemed altogether imaginary. What real grounds of alarm were there? What palpable tokens of evil? None that she could discover. Then why yield to baseless fancies, only to be accounted for by unwonted weakness and excitement?

How often do we thus scornfully discard the inward warning of approaching evil which instinct may be said to furnish us with, because we are unable by any process of reasoning to bring conclusive evidence to support it? We see birds skimming the earth's surface when serene skies seem to belie the forewarning of the coming shower—the animal world announcing the earthquake. Even to metals and flowers we sometimes adjudge a meteorological prescience, and yet deny to our own exquisite and complicate being all power of such-like divination, and are ever on the alert, when our instinctive suggestions in spite of schooling force themselves upon us, to stifle them by argument; whereas it is not impossible, if we carefully noted these secret hints, but we should, in many cases, be amazed to find how after-events tally with their predictions.

Jeanne of Burgundy reasoned herself out of her terrors, her alarmed

conscience subsiding into a deceitful security; and resolved even to conceal her past apprehensions from her sisters, being actually ashamed of having entertained them.

So the fêtes suffered no diminution of gaiety, the royal party's keen enjoyment scarcely yielding to that of the people. For three weeks the city was alive with all the follies of Carnival. Every window was hung with bright-coloured draperies or banners. All classes of Parisians in their newest finery thronged the streets, day and night, listening to long tales of rhymers, and palmers, and songs of trouveres, witnessing *jongleurs'* tricks, and the mysteries performed in all public places. Many were the hard hits at Mother Church; for seldom has the clergy been more disliked in France than it was at this epoch. Royalty itself did not disdain to witness the famous procession *du Renard;* in which the Pope was represented by a fox devouring all the poultry and game he could get at—an allusion to the exactions of the Romish Church, which in its days of power did not always restrict them within wise limits.

The King of England's visit, it is well known, was terminated somewhat abruptly by the castle whither he had adjourned taking fire, when Queen Isabel narrowly escaped with her life. This circumstance checked all further disposition to merriment, and the royal party broke up; Edward, on the one hand, not sorry to escape the French king's vigilant eye, and Philip glad, doubtless, to be relieved of all constraint at a time when he meditated more than one bold stroke of public and home policy.

SUNSHINE AND MOONLIGHT.

BY G. W. THORNBURY.

Bright as sunlight I declare
  Shine my Fanny's tresses, flowing
Like a torrent in the sun,
  Ruffled by the west wind's blowing.
Waves of golden rippling tresses
  Round her brow a halo glowing,
In life's murky woodland path
  Beams of light are round her throwing.

Centres in my Lucy's face
  All the calmness of moonlight,
And a maidenly pure grace,
  Far more sweet, though not so bright.
Eyes as dark as summer night,
  Hair as dusk as leaf of pansey,
Strike with awe, yet so delight,
  That they quite entrance my fancy.

TWO CENTURIES AND A HALF AGO.

WHAT the every-day life of our ancestors was in the times immediately subsequent to the Restoration, Macaulay has shown us in the celebrated third chapter of his "History;" an impression, however, seems to prevail that previously to the civil wars of the seventeenth century, a higher standard, both of morals and manners, existed in England. How far that impression is well founded, it is our present intention to inquire, and we shall begin with a not unimportant feature of their lives, that of courtship and marriage.

It may be objected that these proceedings are the same in all ages, and in all quarters of the world—that the courtship of the father is reproduced in that of the son, and the grandson in his turn treads in the steps of his sire and grandsire. But we submit that this is not so: it is indeed true that certain arts and practices have been in use on these occasions, from the time when our first parents met in the garden of Eden to that in which we are writing. Lucretius,* in his beautiful description of the primitive state of mankind, informs us that in the earliest times presents of pears, acorns, and arbute-berries were found to conciliate the good-will of the savage fair. Again, Spenser† represents the witch's son as making to Florimell not only "many resemblances," but also "many kind remembrances;" these "remembrances" consisting of wildings, or wild apples, young birds, "girlonds of flowres," and squirrels "in bandes." The juniper-tree, to which the female dove has entrusted her "golden couplets," is rifled by the shepherd of Theocritus,‡ while the Damætas of Virgil,§ more adventurous, climbs the "airy elm" to provide a suitable offering for his mistress.

As civilisation advances, and wealth increases, these simple gifts give place to others more costly. In the Book of Ruth we read that Boaz, a "mighty man of wealth," presented his mistress with six measures of barley; while in the Book of Judges, the Jewish hero, Samson, endeavours

* Conciliabat enim vel mutua quamque cupido,
* * * *
Vel pretium glandes atque arbuta, vel pira lecta.
Lib., v. 960.

† Oft from forrest wildings did he bring,
Whose sides empurpled were with smyling red;
And oft young birds whom he had taught to sing
His maistresse' praises sweetly carolled;
Girlonds of flowres sometimes for her fair hed
He fine would dight: sometimes the squirrel wilde
He brought to her in bandes, as conquered
To be her thrall, his fellow-servant vilde:
All which she of him took with countenance meek and mild.
Faerie Queene, book iii. canto vii.

‡ Κἠγὼ μὲν δωσῶ τᾷ παρθένῳ αὐτίκα φάσσαν
Ἐκ τᾶς ἀρκεύθω καθελών· τηνεῖ γὰρ ἐφίσδει.
Idyll. v. 96.

§ Parta meæ Veneri sunt munera, namque notavi
Ipse locum, aëriæ quo congessere palumbes.
Eclog. ii. 68.

Again:

Nec gemere aëria cessabit turtur ab ulmo.
Eclog. i. 58.

to propitiate his Philistine bride with the donation of a kid. Even in the present day we believe that game and fish, supposed to be killed and captured by the suitor himself, are not without a favourable effect, but few, we think, will follow the example of Samson, in providing the *pièce de resistance* for the table of the beloved object.

In the "Two Gentlemen of Verona,"* a drama which is supposed to have been the first fruits of Shakspeare's experience of life, jewels are recommended for this purpose. In this, however, he had been long anticipated by Eliezer of Damascus, who, in the eighteenth hundred and fifty-seventh year before the Christian era, travels into a far country, even Mesopotamia, in search of a wife for his master's son; there, meeting with the fair Rebekah, he forthwith draws out of his stores, not only two bracelets of gold, each weighing ten shekels, but also a golden earring weighing half a shekel. For "earring" the reading in the margin of our Bibles, which is evidently correct, is "jewel for the forehead"—we suppose, a kind of *ferronnière*. With these, accordingly, he proceeds to decorate the brow and arms of the unreluctant damsel.

Petits soins again in the earliest times were found to be efficacious, and have not yet lost their use. Thus Jacob introduces himself to his cousin Rachel by rolling away the stone from the well-head, and watering her flocks. Similarly, Moses, who, however, adds prowess to courtesy, waters the flocks of Zipporah and her sisters, having first "delivered them out of the hand" of the shepherds. A similar process with similar good result is doubtless being repeated at the present day, not only by well-heads, but also at dinner-tables, and in ball-rooms innumerable.

Still, though the substance of the transaction remains the same, the outward form and configuration thereof varies from time to time. In proof of our assertion, we shall call up certain of that constellation of dramatists who shed so bright a lustre on the reigns of Elizabeth and James, and who indeed "held up, as 'twere, a mirror to nature, and showed the very age and body of the time his form and pressure."

Our first illustration will be drawn from a well-known drama, Massinger's "New Way to Pay Old Debts," in which, as most of our readers are aware, the principal person is a *Sir Giles Overreach*, who, having amassed a fortune as a money-lender, purchases with his ill-gotten gains the honour of knighthood, and a princely mansion near Nottingham. A certain *Lord Lovell*, a peer of the realm, and the colonel of a regiment, on which latter circumstance much stress is laid, has accepted *Sir Giles's* invitation to dinner. The usurer being blessed with a fair daughter, *Margaret* by name, forthwith begins to entertain ambitious designs. He makes elaborate preparations for the reception of the great man, and, *inter alia*, summons the young lady to his presence, that her dress, or, as he terms it, her "dressing," including even her *chaussure*, may be subjected to a severe scrutiny. We wonder how a young lady, in the year of Grace 1854, would tolerate such interference on the part of her papa. However that may be, *Sir Giles* having finished his inspection of his daughter's *parure*, sums up the

* Dumb jewels often in their silent kind
More than quick words do move a woman's mind.

result in the following lines. The prelusive "Ha!" must, we should think, have been rather trying to the nerves of the hearer:

Ha! this is a neat dressing!
These orient* pearls and diamonds well placed, too!
The gown affects† me not; it should have been
Embroider'd o'er and o'er with flowers of gold;
But these rich jewels and quaint fashion help it.
And how below?—since oft the wanton eye,
The face observed, descends unto the foot,
Which being well-proportion'd, as yours is,
Invites as much as perfect red and white,
Though without art.

We may observe, *en passant*, that these lines afford a striking instance of what is commonly said of Massinger, that although where rational sentiments and elegant diction alone are required, he is perhaps unsurpassed by any of his contemporaries, yet the highest themes of poetry he is quite unable to cope with. Thus in this passage he has the temerity to attempt a delineation—indeed, a complete analysis—of that great mystery, a lady's dress; with how little success the reader may judge. There is a hazy indistinctness about his description, which plainly shows that the poor man has ventured far beyond his depth.

But to return to the matter in hand. *Sir Giles* is giving his daughter admonitions touching her behaviour to the great man, when the object of all this solicitude is announced:

Sir, the man of honour's come,
Newly alighted.
Over. (*to his Daughter*). In, without reply;
And do as I command, or thou art lost. [*Exit Margaret.*
Is the loud music I gave order for
Ready to receive him?
Marrall. 'Tis, sir.
Over. Let them sound
A princely welcome.
Loud music. Enter Lord Lovell and others.
Lov. Sir, you meet your trouble.
Over. What you are pleased to style so, is an honour
Above my worth and fortunes.

Here *Sir Giles* introduces the company to his lordship; this being ended, he calls out—

Room for my lord.
Lov. I miss, sir, your fair daughter
To crown my welcome.
Over. May it please your lordship
To taste a glass of Greek wine first, and suddenly
She shall attend my lord.
Lov. You'll be obeyed, sir.

His lordship having retired for this refreshment, the father seizes the opportunity to enforce his previous instructions to his daughter; in the midst of this, *Lord Lovell* re-enters, and *Sir Giles* presents the young lady with the words,

A black-brow'd girl, my lord.

* Orient, *i.e.* bright. † Affects, *i.e.* pleases.

We here pause to remark, what may probably not present itself immediately to the minds of our readers, that in that age a dark complexion was held to be inconsistent with any pretensions to beauty. Accordingly, delicacy required a father or brother, on introducing a daughter or sister, to ascribe to her "black brows," or something of the kind, apparently without any regard being paid to its being really the case or not. Indeed, it had become quite a common formula on these occasions. Thus, in the second part of "King Henry IV.," *Master Shallow*, meeting his cousin, *Master Silence*, inquires, as in duty bound, after the health of his wife and family. "And how doth my cousin, your bedfellow?—and your fair daughter and mine, my god-daughter, Ellen?" To which *Master Silence* replies, "Alas! a black ousel, cousin Shallow"—the "ousel" being the blackbird of the present day.

Margaret being thus introduced, *Lord Lovell*, as politeness required, salutes her, and expresses his admiration in words which we shall subsequently find to belong to another common formula:

> As I live, a rare one.

Hereupon the delighted parent exclaims in a stage "aside,"

> That kiss came twanging off;
> I like it.

Then, to the rest of the company, he coolly says,

> Quit the room.

Upon this gentle hint, *exeunt omnes*, except *Overreach*, *Lovell*, and *Margaret*. The father proceeds:

> A little bashful, my good lord; but you
> Will teach her boldness.
> *Lov.* I am happy
> In such a scholar. But——
> *Over.* I am now past learning,
> And therefore leave you to yourselves. Remember——
> [*Aside to Margaret, and exit.*

The reader will be sorry to learn that all these pains are thrown away, the young lady entertaining what is now called a "prior attachment;" and as for the peer of the realm and the colonel of a regiment, reader, only hear him:

> Were Overreach' states* thrice centupled, his daughter
> Millions of degrees much fairer than she is,
> (Howe'er I might urge precedents to excuse me,)
> I would not so adulterate my blood
> By marrying Margaret, and so leave my issue
> Made up of several pieces, one part scarlet
> And the other London blue. In my own tomb
> I will inter my name first.

It may be objected, however, that *Overreach* is a violent, unscrupulous man, and that other fathers conducted these interesting transactions with greater delicacy. We turn, therefore, to another drama by the same writer, the "Great Duke of Florence." Here we are introduced to one *Charomonte*; he is a country gentleman, and evidently a person of con-

* States, *i.e.* estates.

sideration, for he has been entrusted with the education of *Giovanni*, the heir-presumptive to the dukedom. This gentleman, like *Overreach*, is blessed with one fair daughter, by name *Lidia*; of whose perfections the *Grand Duke* has heard so glowing an account, that he sends his favourite and prime minister, *Sanazarro*, to inspect and report upon them. We may here remark, that though the scene is laid in a foreign land, the manners are those of England. The dramatists of that day, for the most part, took their plots from Italian novels, and with the plots the names of persons and places; but that was all they borrowed; the rest they drew from what they saw around them. In this instance the reader may, if he please, term *Sanazarro* the Earl of Somerset, *Charomonte* Sir Roger Aston, and the fair *Lidia* Mistress Dorothy. Thus much being premised, we come to *Sanazarro's* visit. He does not announce his coming before hand, but takes *Charomonte* by surprise. As soon, however, as that worthy gentleman is apprised of his arrival, he gives such orders as the shortness of the time admits of; with respect to his daughter he says, not perhaps in very choice phrase—

> Bid my daughter
> Trim herself up to the height. I know this courtier
> Must have a smack at her.

He then proceeds to receive his guest—compliments are exchanged between them, and *Sanazarro* at once enters on the subject which occupies the thoughts of both gentlemen.

> Sir, I have heard
> Your happiness in a daughter.
> *Char.* Sits the wind there?
> *San.* Fame gives her out for a rare masterpiece.

Here *Charomonte* slightly deviates from the common formula; for instead of replying "A black-brow'd girl, sir," or "Alas, sir, a black ousel," he contents himself with a milder expression, and merely says,

> 'Tis a plain village girl, sir, but obedient:
> That's her best beauty, sir.

Further conversation on the same subject ensues, not, however, of especial interest; at last the young lady enters, attended by her waiting gentlewoman, and we may presume, "trimmed up to the height." Her father introduces her

> As she is,
> She comes to make a tender of that service
> Which she is bound to pay.
> *San.* (*to Lidia*). With your fair leave,
> I'll make bold to salute you.
> *Lid.* Sir, you have it.
> *Here Sanazarro salutes Lidia.*
> *Char.* How he falls off!

This exclamation of the careful father is at first sight rather puzzling; but it subsequently appears that *Sanazarro* is so much struck with the charms of the young lady, that he falls into what in that age was called a "rapture;" at the present day we should say, "his wits are gone woolgathering;" here by the expression "how he falls off," *Charomonte* means "how inattentive he is become!"

The salutation being completed, *Lidia* inquires after the health of *Giovanni*, who has been brought up as her playmate, and is now residing at Court. *Sanazarro*, in his "rapture," pays no attention to her inquiries, but stands lost in contemplation of her charms, and speculations as to the cause of his mission: all his remarks on these topics being given "asides."

We cannot, therefore, wonder at the anxious parent's exclamation:

> This is strange, my lord!

San. I crave your pardon and yours, matchless maid;
For such I must report you; and I must add,
If your discourse and reason parallel
The rareness of your more than human form,
You are a wonder.

Here the fond father interposes—

> Pray you, my lord, make trial.
> She can speak, I assure you; and that my presence
> May not take from her freedom, I will leave you;
> For know, my lord, my confidence dares trust her
> Where and with whom she pleases.—If he be
> Taken the right way with her, I cannot fancy
> A better match. (*Aside.*)

Hereupon he calls off the waiting-gentlewoman, and they leave the young couple to themselves. The gentleman apparently needs encouragement; for *Lidia* is obliged to arouse him by asking,

> What's your will, sir?

He answers—

> Madam, you are so large a theme to treat of,
> And every grace about you offers to me
> Such copiousness of language, that I stand
> Doubtful which first to touch at.

The young lady of course depreciates her charms, but concludes thus:

> Since you are resolved
> To prove yourself a courtier in my praise,
> As I'm a woman (and you men affirm
> Our sex loves to be flattered) I'll endure it.
> Now, when you please, begin.

Here *Charomonte*, unable to endure his suspense any longer "enters above;" where, however, he hears nothing to gratify him, for *Sanazarro*, instead of availing himself of the young lady's permission, falls again into his "rapture." After a time, the young lady, finding that with all her efforts she cannot attract his attention, bewails herself in this strain:

> I ne'er was proud,
> Nor can I find I am guilty of a thought
> Deserving this neglect and strangeness from you.

Even this touching appeal has no effect; so at last she comes to the point:

> Pray you, sir,
> Or license me to leave you, or deliver
> The reasons which invite you to command
> My tedious waiting on you.

The fond father, "above"—

As I live,
I know not what to think on't: is't his pride,
Or his simplicity?

At last *Sanazarro* comes to himself and exclaims—

Whither have my thoughts
Carried me from myself? In this my dulness
I've lost an opportunity. (*He turns to Lidia.*)

She, however, and we cannot wonder at it, to punish him for his ill-breeding, now in her turn "falls off," and utters aside a long eulogy on the merits of *Giovanni* as compared with those of *Sanazarro*. The gentleman attempts to recal her attention.

Will you vouchsafe your ear, fair lady?

And again—

Will you please to hear me?

At last he says,

Pray you, do not think me
Unworthy of your ear: it was your beauty
That turned me statue. I can speak, fair lady.
Lid. And I can hear. The harshness of your courtship
Cannot corrupt my courtesy.
San. Will you hear me,
If I speak love?
Lid. Provided you be modest:
I were uncivil else.
Char. (*above*). They are come to parley,
I must observe this nearer.

He then "retires;" that is, he leaves his station above, with a view to entering below. *Sanazarro*, in the mean while, by way of making up for lost time, comes to the point with *Lidia*, addressing her in the common formula:

You are a rare one,
And such, but that my haste commands me hence,
I could converse with ever. Will you grace me
With leave to visit you again?
Lid. So you,
At your return to court, do me the favour
To make a tender of my humble services
To the Prince Giovanni.
San. Ever touching
Upon that string (*aside*). And will you give me hope
Of future happiness?
Lid. That's as I shall find you.
The fort that's yielded at the first attempt
Is hardly worth the taking.

Here *Charomonte* re-enters below, and remarks "aside"—

O, they are at it.
San. (*To Charomonte*). She is a magazine of all perfections,
And 'tis death to part from her, yet I must.
(*To Lidia.*) A parting kiss, fair maid.
Lid. That custom grants you.
Char. A homely breakfast doth attend your lordship,
Such as the place affords.

San. (*Looking on Lidia*). No, I have feasted
Already here. My thanks, and so I leave you.
(*To Lidia*). I will see you again. Till this unhappy hour
I ne'er was lost, and what to do or say
I have not yet determined. (*Aside and exit.*)
Char. Gone so abruptly,
'Tis very strange.
Lid. Under your favour, sir,
His coming hither was to little purpose
For anything I heard from him.

A conclusion in which we think the reader will agree. It only remains to be stated that *Sanazarro* is not ultimately successful in his courtship, but is obliged to fall back on an old flame whom he has deserted for *Lidia*.

Having seen how the fathers and suitors of that day conducted these matters, let us now take a view of the brothers. Here Shirley's tragedy of the "Maid's Revenge" will assist us. Two young gentlemen, *Antonio* and *Sebastiano*, have contracted a close intimacy in Lisbon, to which city they were sent, apparently, for the purpose of education. We wonder that Shirley did not send them to Coimbra, as in his day the university there had a high reputation. At the opening of the drama, *Sebastiano* is represented as inviting *Antonio* to his ancestral castle of Avero, in which, indeed, there is nothing but what might be expected. The sequel of the invitation is, however, rather startling. In this case, as in that of the "Great Duke of Florence," the reader may with advantage substitute English for Portuguese names, and call Coimbra Oxford, *Sebastiano* and *Antonio* Sir Basil Brooke and Master Winwood, while Mistress Frances and Mistress Cicely will serve for *Catalina* and *Berinthia*. *Sebastiano* begins thus:

The noble courtesies I have receiv'd
At Lisbon, worthy friend, so much engage me,
That I must die indebted to your worth,
Unless you mean to accept what I have studied,
Although but partly, to discharge the sum
Due to your honour'd love.

This preamble rather alarms *Antonio*, and he inquires anxiously,

How now, Sebastiano, will you forfeit
The name of friend, then? I did hope our love
Had outgrown compliment.

To this *Sebastiano* answers,

I spake my thoughts;
My tongue and heart are relatives; I think
I have deserved no base opinion from you.
I wish not only to perpetuate
Our friendship, but t' exchange that common name
Of friend for——

Antonio now becomes thoroughly alarmed, and breaks out into a panegyric on friendship. *Sebastiano* then, without more circumlocution, discloses his object:

Nay, then, Antonio, you mistake, I mean not
To leave off friend, which with another title
Would not be lost. Come then, I'll tell you, sir,
I would be friend and brother: thus our friendship

Shall, like a diamond set in gold, not lose
His sparkling, but show fairer. I have a pair
Of sisters which I would commend, but that
I might seem partial, their birth and fortunes
Deserving noble love: if thou be'st free
From other fair engagements, I would be proud
To speak them worthy: come, shalt go and see them.
I would not beg them suitors: fame has spread
Through Portugal their persons, and drawn to Avero
Many affectionate gallants.
Ant. Catalina and Berinthia?
Seb. The same.
Ant. Report speaks loud their beauties, and no less
Virtue in either. Well, I see you strive
To leave no merit, where you mean to honour.
I cannot otherwise escape the censure
Of one ungrateful, but by waiting on you
Home to Avero.
Seb. You shall honour me
And glad my noble father, to whom you are
No stranger; your own worth before hath been
Sufficient preparation.
Ant. Ha!
I have not so much choice, Sebastiano:
But if one sister of Antonio's
May have a commendation to your thoughts
(I will not spend much art in praising her,
Her virtue speak itself) I shall be happy
And be confirm'd your brother, though I miss
Acceptance at Avero.
Seb. Still you outdo me. I could never wish
My service better placed. At opportunity
I'll visit you at Elvas: i' the mean time
Let's haste to Avero, where with you I'll bring
My double welcome, and not fail to second
Any design.
Ant. You shall teach me a lesson
Against we meet at Elvas Castle, sir.

One would have supposed that so much candour and openness on the part of these young men would have rendered the path of true love smooth, if anything could; on the contrary, the loves of both turn out most unhappily. Their subsequent fortunes, however, do not fall within the compass of our present design.

OUR HEROIC WOMEN OF HISTORY.

So noble a subject as female heroism, or the deeds of our heroic women of history, is a theme well calculated to inspire even the most timid bosom. When we consider how these our sisters have stood forward on the pages of history, how their names have become household words, and their deeds have stirred in us an amount of patriotic ardour that awaited but the time to call it into action, we cannot but feel that there are amongst us, even at the present day, Joan d'Arcs, Catherines, and Marullas, with women as Roman-hearted as Volumnia, Valeria, and Vergilia. Has it been any peculiar amount of education or of intellect with which our lion-hearted sisters have been gifted? No; and herein is our peculiar boast. Native heroism springs not from wealth or honour, from ambition or the lust of power, it is a heaven-born gift lurking in every woman's heart, and many are the fireside martyrs and spirit conquerors of whose silent footsteps the world knows nothing. There are greater victories than those that are won over cities; greater suffering than is known on the battle-field. Of the high and noble amongst our sisters we, however, speak gladly, feeling as we do that their names, emblazoned on the banners of fame, are yet great and honoured witnesses of all that a noble womanhood is capable of completing—Catherine I., Empress of Russia, was one of these extraordinary women: when her husband, Peter the Great, was surrounded in his camp at Pruth by ten thousand Turks, and in danger of perishing through famine with his army—when, despondent and miserable, he shut himself up in his tent and would not that any one should approach him—then was shown this Empress's true courage. By a tact that woman only knows, and the sacrifice of all her jewellery, she won over the grand vizier to her interest, and so influenced by him the Turkish general, that peace was proposed and finally carried out; the nation thus owing to the presence of mind of one woman their entire liberation. It is of Catherine we are told that being, after her husband's death, styled "great, wise, and mother of the people," she refused all these titles, except the last, which she said she hoped ever to preserve.

Nor is it only the noble who are heroines, for still throughout the Alps is remembered Martha Glar, sprung from a lowly shepherd line. This woman at the time when her native valleys, that had slept undisturbed for ages, were beginning to echo to the rumour of French threats and Gallic perfidy, sprung forward a woman born of the times, and convoking around her a host of her country-people, marched with them against the approaching enemy, holding first a meeting in the churchyard, wherein she addressed them as daughters of William Tell, and told them the time was at hand when they were to prove themselves worthy descendants of that deliverer of his country. It is reported of her, that she performed prodigies of valour at the battle of Frauenbrun, and that out of the two hundred and sixty gallant women her spirit had aroused to follow her, only eighty left the field alive. Well did she carry out her own feeling when she implored them "to conquer or to

die; to live or to perish with the freedom and independence of their dear country."

Nor must we forget Joan of Arc, well as her history is known throughout the world. This simple peasant girl, at the age of nineteen, was the immediate cause of the establishment of Charles VII. on the throne of his ancestors, and of the expulsion of the English from her country. Joan appears to have considered herself an instrument in the hands of Heaven for the deliverance of France. She appeared before Charles dressed as a warrior, then arming herself cap-a-pie, mounted on horseback, and appeared thus to the whole people, the king investing her with the supreme command of his army. We know how this persuasion in her heavenly mission struck terror at last into the hearts of the English—how she raised the siege of Orleans—how she took possession of Auxerre, Troges, and Chalons, and opened the road for the king to Rheims, where he was ultimately crowned. We know how she fell into the hands of the English and was put to death by them on the scaffold. Yet her unhappy fate can but make us admire more this admirable heroine, who dared all dangers for the sake of serving her prince and her country.

There are also more unknown instances of patriotism, as in the case of the Silesian girl, who not knowing otherwise how to contribute to the expenses of the war which her countrymen were waging against the invasion of the French in 1813, set off privately to Breslau and disposed of her only property, her magnificent tresses, for the sum of two dollars. The story, however, goes, that the hairdresser, touched with the girl's conduct, reserved this hair for the manufacture of finer ornaments, so that at last, by this generous sacrifice, no less a sum than a hundred dollars were subscribed to the exigencies of the state. But what imports it to bring forth such single instances of heroism when every page of history but multiplies these examples? Patriotism, as we observed before, dwells in every female bosom. The opportunity may not arise during a lifetime of exercising this quality, best known in its noble thoughts, generous self-sacrifices, and its exertions in the cause of human happiness. These are but other phases of our national love now beautifying our home-hearths. Long may they dwell there, silent household angels; but we are not the less persuaded that the great public to which we belong is never lost sight of, and that when England demands the services of her daughters, they will rise in one common cause, and prove that indeed heroism and patriotism is but another name for Woman.

A FEW CHAPTERS ON THE WORKING CLASSES.

No. II.—Education.

BY R. P. ROWSELL, ESQ.

A painfully difficult subject is that of the education of our poorer classes. There are very few other subjects upon which opinions so widely vary. "For," say the majority of the wealthy and influential, "if we educate at all, we will not leave out—nay, we will put most prominently forward, that religious teaching without which we believe all the general information we should bestow would but prove hurtful to its possessor and the community." Then to this is made answer, "In so resolving you commit a cruel injustice, for as your religious instruction will take no cognisance of different creeds and tenets, you virtually refuse to eager applicants that secular teaching which would unquestionably be advantageous to them, simply because they cannot, in their consciences, accept your spiritual lessons which clash with their honest convictions and judgment."

We need not say that we do not intend here entering into any lengthened and elaborate argument upon this vehemently-disputed question. But as our purpose is to pen a brief article upon the education of the masses, we must of necessity pronounce and support an opinion as to the extent to which, in our view, religion should enter into the education of the poor. And we state at once, broadly and distinctly, that without for a moment denying that it is a very great, a very important advantage, the combining religious with worldly tuition, where the union be practicable, we are strongly of opinion that the withholding secular information merely because spiritual will not be accepted with it is a fallacious policy, tending to retard rather than to expedite that mighty triumph of truth which every Christian longs to witness.

For, reader, our argument is after this wise. We admit, of course, that in the case of the vicious man, the law-breaker, the criminal, that it will be a fortunate thing if he shall have received not a tittle of education, because the more knowledge and intelligence he may possess, the greater power is there within him to work evil and do injury. And if it could be shown to us that no other result than this melancholy depravity could have been expected from the early education of this man not having embraced religion and piety, we might find ourselves on the point of confessing that as in this case there had been an insurmountable barrier to our inculcating religious truth, seeing that our views on this head were opposed more or less vehemently to those held by the parents or protectors of the child, we had better (sadly as we might have come to the conclusion) have proffered no kind of education, and so at least have rendered as harmless as possible the being who would be certain hereafter to turn our gift against us, and wound us with the sword which we ourselves should have put into his hands. But is this the case, reader? Let me take a poor child, and proceed to impart both secular and spiritual instruction. I am immediately stopped in the latter by the declaration that the creed taught him is not my creed,

and on the subject of religion I may not speak to him. Now, I may feel greatly sorry for this. I may be grieved at heart. I may be conscious that if I proceed in my teaching at all, I am leaving out the topic which I should like to put prominently forward, I am involuntarily withholding the best boon which I have to bestow. But now the question is, seeing that I cannot get over the difficulty, shall I turn the child aside altogether, and refuse to impart any other than a perfect education? Supposing I do this, what will ensue? The child very likely will receive no tuition whatever, either sacred or worldly. He will grow up in a half savage state, and be a disgrace to the land of his birth. But will his ignorance be his darkest feature? Hardly so. How clearly have carefully-collected statistics proved that where is the deepest ignorance is generally, almost invariably, the gloomiest immorality. Do not we all know how very lovingly they go hand-in-hand, and take sweet counsel together? The half-brutish condition, does it not seem to open wide its arms to vice? The semi-savage, of what nature can be his pleasures; are they not, of necessity, low, mean, sensual? Do they not literally grovel in the dust? Is not the eye ever riveted to the ground, is it ever uplifted to the heaven which is above?

But supposing that instead of putting the poor child away from me, I still tenderly regard him and keep him near me. Dear, youthful being! if I may not speak to thee of God, I will trust that He will speak to thee Himself; and if I may not point thee to Him directly, indirectly I will bring Him before thee, through the works of His hands, and the proofs of His existence. And as I gradually raise thee from thy brutal ignorance—as I open up thy mind to new impressions, and cast in fresh ideas—as I cause gradually the sun of intelligence and healthy knowledge (albeit it may be of only a secular character) to shine brightly into thy awakened intellect, very sure I am that I am doing thy soul good, although I have been commanded not to minister to its requirements.

Fervently do I believe that mental advancement has a powerful tendency to create corresponding advancement in religious feeling. Very clever men may have sneered at piety, or been absolute atheists, but they were the exceptions. The greater the grasp of intellect, the greater, I believe, the disposition, naturally, to deal with the mightiest and most wonderful of all subjects—the subject of a Supreme Being. God forbid I should say that the poor man in his cottage cannot think of or in any way comprehend the Creator of all things—but this I say, that the greater the height to which the intellect may ascend, the more vigorous and comprehensive the views it may be enabled to grasp, the more will it be inclined naturally to ponder mysteries which gratify it from their very vastness and impenetrability, the more entrancing will become the awe and admiration with which it will contemplate that MASTER MIND before which the prostration of every human intellect is so absolute and complete.

Very strongly then do we hold this view, that, inasmuch as the child, if left in ignorance, *must* fall (we may almost venture to say) into habits of depravity and vice; and, inasmuch as the instructing and improving him will have a powerful tendency to turn him from these habits, we may wisely run the risk—we may composedly contemplate the contingency—that in some few cases our anticipated preservative may prove of no

vail, and therefore that it had been better had we never applied it. In this world we have, unhappily, to choose between evils, and though it may be that in one case the simple secular education may (apparently) through its non-accompaniment by religious, have worked very ill to the recipient, as it has only strengthened him for evil—surely it is far more than a set-off against this, that in ten cases where, had no education at all been administered, nothing but sin and misery could have ensued, plain, useful, elevating instruction has been the means of inducing propriety of conduct, integrity, and industry.

Are we at all forgetting the advantage of religious teaching? Not so. We have already said that ordinarily most heartily do we commend the placing the Bible in the hand of every child, with exhortation to regard it as the foremost book. We cannot say, however, that we think it should be given him directly he can read. Of all shocking things, we deem the most shocking the—so to speak—playing at prayers, and turning the Bible into a lesson-book. We turn away with absolute disgust from an infant gabbling the holiest expressions, to be rewarded by a sweet tart or a penny in his money-box. If I teach my child a prayer, let me teach it him when no eye but my own rests upon him, and no other mortal ear hears him. He may read to me the Bible at any time, but he ought not to open it till he can in some degree, at least, understand it, and know that there is a far higher purpose in view in his perusing it than the merely correcting his emphasis or improving his style.

It may well irritate those who have religion most sincerely at heart, and who nevertheless advocate that children should be taught without even its mention, if its mention would be a barrier to their being taught at all—to hear the inflated and arrogant fashion in which this view is occasionally denounced by some puffed-up young minister from the pulpit, who seeks to hide lack of brains and learning by vehement display of bigotry and narrow-mindedness. As a body, we speak with great respect for our clergy, but we confess that it does appear to us most strongly that amongst them at the present time are a number of young men utterly unworthy of the sacred office, unfitted for it in most cases by sheer shallowness of intellect, and in others by the yet graver deficiency, the want of that humility which should cause them to keep constantly in mind that it is not the gratification of their own petty vanity they should constantly be seeking, but the destruction of error and advancement of truth.

It is a point much argued to what extent it is desirable to educate the children of the masses; whether we should be satisfied with imparting a little knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and a dash, mayhap, of geography, or whether we should go further, and furnish an education well-nigh equal to that bestowed on the offspring of the middle classes. We hardly know that, as a rule, the latter course would be advisable. It would be labour thrown away in most cases, for the boy, on finally quitting school, would have no leisure to keep up his extraordinary attainments, and they would be quickly lost. But it would be a great thing if at the head of our schools for the Industrial Classes we could place men possessing really some knowledge of a boy's mind, who could discriminate between a child of simply mediocre capacity and one who, with proper at-

tention and training, would be likely to become a great benefit to the community. But the misfortune is, at this time, that not only does the half-idiot receive just as much culture as the boy of unquestionable ability, but that even if the latter make certain progress in spite of all neglect, he can obtain entrance, afterwards, only by the rarest good fortune into any suitable field for the display of his powers. John Smith's child can do little more than add two and two together, while Samuel Brown's may be a boy who, if properly educated, might shame many a cabinet minister. But they are both taught the same things in the same way, and will both, hereafter, hoe turnips in the same field. We want some means to be devised by which silent and crouching talent may be called into action and exercised in some fit sphere for the welfare of the nation. In a former number of this periodical we sketched something at least of a plan with this object, and it was with no small surprise and gratification we observed a short time ago a project originated by the present government exactly in accordance with our suggestion; but it has fallen; pride and paltry feeling overthrew it, and the effort was abandoned. Let those, however, take care who would hinder the advancement of our Working Classes. What intelligence is there now amongst them, what shrewdness, what keenness of perception and sound common sense. And is it strange that, this being so, the cry is "Onward!" It is not a tumultuous rush, it is not a boisterous or turbulent dashing to a goal—it is a calm, steady, majestic march to a legitimate and longed-for destination. Shall we oppose the movement? Not if we be wise. We shall rather assist it, by clearing the way so that the immense throng may orderly and peaceably go forward. Throw open the doors, cast down the barriers, let the prizes of fame and fortune be freely contested by the peer and the peasant, and whence shall come the cloud which shall shadow us, or who shall threaten the danger which shall make us to fear?

TEA AND TOAST REVERIES.

BY JOHN STEBBING.

The early part of February, and the rain falling gently and the wind moaning. I am in my lodgings at Beanfield, consoling myself after the toils of the first day in my new engagement, with a cup of tea and a bright fire. I am thinking of what the old Elizabethan poets thought and wrote about the scene of my new abode; they did not know it under the name of Beanfield, but they loved it sincerely; they placed the scenes of some of their plays here; when wearied with the noise and bustle of the great city, they would wander through Beanfield Chase, and as the moon hid itself, as though for fear, behind its quaint, hundred-armed trees, they would see such wonderous sights that their English tongues had to emulate sweet music to recount them. I lost my way as I was coming home—home! What do I mean? I have only been beneath this roof a few hours. Alas! we learn to call any place home that keeps us from the wind and the rain. I lost my way; the wind shut the door behind me a little before I had decided in which direction to go, and the

rain hurried me into a wrong decision, and after half an hour's walking, whilst I thought myself still upon the high road, I suddenly found myself beneath a great shed or barn, where half a dozen girls and young women were standing, waiting till the rain should abate a little. "Here's Cary crying again," said one of them. "What for?" said another, in a sort of sullen, but not surly or ill-humoured tone. "Because she can't carry them chumps." I wanted to know what chumps were, and so I went and stood by the little girl alluded to, who was leaning against an overturned wheelbarrow somewhat beyond the roof; I found that chumps were short pieces of stick, and then observed that each of the girls had a great bundle of them. But if little girls have to carry chumps, I haven't; I am a lawyer's clerk, I am; so I found my way again, and came to the churchyard, on one side of which there is an old brick house with larger gables than I ever saw anywhere else, and an octagonal tower; I suppose it is the rectory. Beyond the churchyard was a pathway, a kind of lane, fields on one side and a row of cottages on the other; I could see into all the rooms as I passed, but I only remember that in one a woman sat alone, with a candle so close to her nose that it threw a great shadow like a beak on the wall. When I left this path I had to cross some fields, and then to go along the side of a river, which, however, does not look much like a river where I have to pass it, for there are garden-walls on one side, and houses close upon it on the other, and little bridges from every house, and at one angle a tavern, throwing a great glare upon the silent water. I could not help stopping a moment to lean over one of the little bridges, thinking what a strange delightful thing it would be to dive into that dark stream and swim slowly with its current through the wide fields on which the clouds descend at night to pasture—through the curved banks where the tench makes its home amidst the roots of the alders—through the pleasure-grounds and parks of stately houses, of whom the ripple amidst the weeds may tell some great sorrow buried beneath these innocent waters; and so past villages whose common gossiping life the drenching shadow of night happily quenches; past the sterile moor where the bank becomes a precipitous sandy cliff; and then with a full bold sweep up to the wealthy mill, where the silver tide leaps over the weir to wander amidst the dark depths of the wood.

The day has brought new scenes and new faces, and the night, for I begin to feel sleepy, a new bedroom; but the time has passed when a new bedroom could almost prevent us from sleeping and awake us an hour earlier; we fear that that bedroom in Kent, with the plantation almost down to the windows, or even that square room, which was not a bedroom, but only a room with a bed in it, in the old priory in Somersetshire, would fail to excite in us on awaking a single pleasurable sensation now. I try to look out of the window to see what sort of a night it is, and a dim blurred image of myself looks in upon me reproachfully, as if I had shut out my spirit in the rain and the darkness, and were going to sleep without it. I am not at all sure that it is not sometimes done.

I wonder whether our slumber changes its complexion when we change our abodes? I can detect no change in my dreams; perhaps the birds could tell us of the various visions that haunt the elm and the yew. I would choose the horse-chesnut to build in if I were a bird, and have

the great white waxen blossoms to light me to my couch through all the purple nights of June. The rain has cleared off, and the stars are come forth, joining with the little drops to flood the windows with a silver, tremulous light. I wonder whether little gipsy babies ever lie awake at night and look at the stars through the chinks of the canvas tent; and I wonder if trampers, sleeping clandestinely under haystacks, are glad at the sound of a shower, thinking of the softness of the road for their blistered feet in the morning? Hark! there's three o'clock striking! What a number of persons and places and things I have been thinking of during these last three hours, and not one of them can teach me slumber. I must make an incantation. I put my hands over my eyes and think of the bright summer eve when I stood at the open window looking over the golden-tinted roofs of the houses, and Alice descended the stairs slowly and silently, and we neither of us spoke, and I heard the carriage rattling off, and we had not said good-by! Now I must either slumber or weep.

Next to my room at the offices is the room in which the magistrates meet; a large room with a window looking on to the garden, in which the blackbirds and thrushes are already busy. On one side of it are the deep cupboards, in which are kept, or rather in which have accumulated, the greater part of the papers of the office during the last half century, and I spent the afternoon in searching amongst them for the old court-rolls of the Manor of Beanfield. I have always felt a great interest in manors from the time when I used to walk with the nurse past a great tree, on which was fastened a board denouncing vengeance against trespassers, by order of "the Lord of the Manor;" and when, afterwards, I came to read Tacitus and Perkins, and to learn about feudal chieftains, and tenants in capite, and mesne lords and demesnes, and of hall-motes, and of courts baron and leet, of villeins and lords paramount, and of escheats and of fines, I hugely envied that Lord Moreton who at the Conquest became possessed of nine hundred and sixty-three good English manors. But whilst, on this afternoon, I was letting the quiet spring sunlight into many a deep recess which seemed not to have been disturbed for years, opening massive iron-clasped parchment volumes, and reading the names of ale-conners and constables, of headboroughs and of stewards, who had signed their pages some three centuries since, I met with some other books which, though of a later date, were still old, and had an interest of their own; here were the scribbling books, and the irregularly kept diaries, and the *Hortus siccus*, and the private letters of that Arthur B., whose name is signed as party and witness and trustee to many of the heaviest deeds in the office. He has been long dead, and if he be conscious of it, forgives me perchance that I cheer my heart with his so long-hidden confidences. I now find that the room which is my office was once his bedroom, and that it was there he watched over the last illness of his youngest brother. He was a poet, if I may judge from this ledger, half filled with verses; how funnily the rhymes come into the pounds, shillings, and pence columns! But now I see that the greatest part of them are copies; "Oft in the Stilly Night" is repeated three times, and, as if the copier were not satisfied even then, there is a note at the conclusion of the third: "Mem.—Ask Willy to copy it." Yet, though the greater part of the verses are by well-known authors, there are some

which would scarcely have been selected; wanting in melody and genius, but not without a certain fitness, as it seems to me, to the place and circumstances in which I find them. I copy a few.

One stray shot to wound a bird in a nest,
The little thing bleeding on its mother's breast,
The young leaves wond'ring at the purple rain,
The bright grass grieving at the rusty stain.

When will the night come? All the air is dry,
No spray of cloudy hope along the sky;
The platted grass and rush is harsh and sere,
And rustles to the throb of pain and fear.

But list! The dews are falling! Give them joy,
They drink the dewy sweets that never cloy;
The yellow beaks that did so utter woe
Close softly on their sorrow's overflow.

And this is night! The stars fine windows make
To all the leafy frames; the cool winds shake
A bloom of odour through the summer air;
But this is night, and here is cold despair.

When will the day come? Can the fern behold
Above the broom the prophecy of gold,
Of golden dawn? Now comes the light once more
And finds the bird dead on the reedy floor!

Just as I had finished copying these lines a client came to speak with me—a fine bluff fellow, a middle-aged man, a farmer. He holds a large portion of the Trinity College lands hereabouts, and is about to have a new lease on three lives. He has selected two of the lives, and came to speak about the third.

It has been said of people who travel on the sea, that there is but a single plank between them and eternity; and twice a week there is but a single plank, in the shape of a door, between me and almost an eternity of suffering. At such times the sunlight becomes ugly, and that thrush, which ever seems to mistake the ivy clustering about the chimney-stack for a pleasant tree, is an offence. I find a great difference between the magistrates' room in Bow-street and that here in Beanfield, for in London, with the exception of a general impression on the mind of one of the constables occasionally that So-and-so is a member of the swell mob, the prisoners are generally unknown; but there is something of the air of a Greek tragedy about the scenes which take place within my hearing every Tuesday and Friday; in a few brief words bandied about between police-officer and magistrates' clerk, witnesses, prisoners, and magistrates, I have observed the sketch of some family during the last fifty years portrayed with all its scenery of hovel and mansion, of labour on the roads and unexpected fortune; now the picture is lightened up by one speaker with the mention of two or three children who died early, and now darkened by the voice of the prisoner herself, who, in answer to the magistrates, says she is seventy-three, and came out of the workhouse because it is summer and the leaves are out;

and then police-constable X. explains that the ivy grows over one of the windows in the dormitory set apart for the old women, and that it is a common thing for two or three of them to look up when the sun shines there, and congratulate each other that summer has come at last. I made a mistake when I spoke of a Greek tragedy; there is no tragedy here. She came out of the house and wandered about for two days without food or shelter, and then stole some turnips—poor old thing! I can hear the chair shake, on the back of which she is leaning for support. The magistrates are large-waiscoated men, and she is let off on condition of instantly returning to the workhouse, and remaining there. It has been after all but a genteel comedy. I wonder whether the old creature, when she returns to the whitewashed walls, will be cut by the other old creatures who were not possessed by so irresistible an affection for the summer and green leaves.

When a man passes the evening alone, he is certainly a most helpless individual, and at the mercy of every trifle which may come across him; if some wretched idler passes my window humming a song, I am obliged to go back with it to the great city, and to bring it forth from an open window in some quiet square to the lips of a passing postman, from whom it is received, when half drowned in his loud knocks, by the driver of a laundress's cart; jolt, jolt, it goes over the stones, reaching the ears of stockbrokers in omnibuses, through all the noise, like a dream; at the corner of the first dusty hedge-row beyond the bricks and mortar, it is transferred to a ploughboy, who has been on a visit to his aunt at Mile-end and is now returning to his Essex home with the acquisitions of a shilling and an orange; he tries to make the song go to the tune of the bells of Shoreditch Church, and gives up the attempt in despair just in time to bestow the original melody on the little girl standing at a cottage-door, listening to the sound of the wind through the yet leafless trees, and trying to fancy it like the sea-murmur she heard last autumn; and from her it went to the carter, whose noisy voice will probably carry it back to town within half a dozen hours after it left it, to awake me from a pleasant doze to this idle thought.

I passed a meadow, two or three days ago, half broken up by the plough, and finding it in the same state to-day, I learned that the ploughman had died in the midst of his work last week. It seems strange to one leaning on the gate, and thinking, that the dark, miry half of the field should represent a life, and the bright, green turf, death!

How the ashes creak! I must to bed.

Certainly the world cannot be very large, for it is almost impossible for two strangers to enter into conversation without finding that they are acquainted with mutual friends; and, viewed in this manner, Beanfield must be very small indeed, for the only two persons in the place about whom I have felt the least interest have come into juxtaposition. Yes! the stars of the little girl who could not carry the "chumps," and of the bluff farmer who is about to take the new lease of the college lands are in antagonism.—I heard this morning an unusual noise and bustle in

the justice-room, and, on entering it, found there as prisoners the girls and young women, together with some older persons of the same class, whom I had seen beneath the shed on my first evening in Beanfield. They were charged with a systematic course of plunder from the hedges and barns of my bluff farmer. The little girl was again weeping, but more bitterly. The charge was fully proved, and the accused were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. As to the child, it appeared very manifestly that she had been driven to the theft by her stepmother, who had escaped from justice by flight, and as the only alternative to sending her to prison, she was sent to the workhouse. To the workhouse! I seemed to feel that I had rather that she had been sent to prison. I went back to my employment at the college lease in a very bad humour. Since the affair of the old woman I did not like workhouses. I have seen the girls in a workhouse—how pale they are! How without any interest in life! I could almost wish that little Cary should steal all the hedge-rows in England, so that she might first see the car of spring driving over the green meadow waves, with a foam of May blossoms following its track, and the cowslips striking forth as the sparks from its horses' hoofs. But she must pass her life in the paved court-yard, dressed in the uniform of poverty, with no pretty wild curls to set off her blooming cheeks, and no blooming cheeks to be set off by pretty wild curls; her eyes will become listless and dull; her mouth cunning and bad.—Full of ill-humour, I went on driving away at the college lease, and when I had concluded it, was more annoyed than surprised to find that I had filled up all the spaces which I should have left blank for the description of the third life, with the name and description of my little workhouse girl, Cary Lennox. I raised my pen with the intention of obliterating the error, when I paused—Cary was just the kind of life that the third life should be; why not let her name remain? She would then have some sort of union, slight and nominal as it would be, with the world beyond the paved court-yard. As I wandered amongst the pleasant college meadows, I might think that their destiny depended in some degree on a little prisoned life, and their buoyant liberty would seem to impart to it some liberty. I let the name remain; the deed was engrossed and signed—no one asked any questions respecting the third life.

I went to take tea with the farmer yesterday. What a delicious April afternoon it was! The windows opened on to the lawn, and as we gazed on the golden glory of the scene before us, we came to speak of the lease. "By-the-by, papa," said little Mary, as she stood with her arm round her father's neck, "who was the third 'life' you used to say you had to choose?" The farmer looked at me to give the answer, and when I gave it, oh! the outcry!—the statistics that were brought forward to prove that little girls don't live long when they live in workhouses!—the tales that I heard about the badness of the water and the badness of the bread! The result of it all was that before I left it had been determined by universal acclamation that little Cary must not be left in the workhouse, but must be transferred to the farmer's house, as pretty Mary's maid.—Just what I wanted to contrive!

EXPIATION: A TALE OF THE REIGN OF TERROR.

FROM THE FRENCH.

By Henry Cooke.

VII.

À LA LANTERNE!

On reaching the abode of the Marquis d'Auton, Philippe threw a small stone at the bedroom window of Mademoiselle Louise.

"Mademoiselle," he said, in a low tone, on seeing the window cautiously raised, "I bring a letter for your father."

"Ah! Philippe, is it you?" she said, hoping that it had been her lover. "Speak to me of the chevalier! Has he returned to the Hotel Chaville?"

"Yes, mademoiselle," replied Philippe, not scrupling to utter a falsehood to excuse his young master; "he has returned in good health, and is busily occupied making arrangements for his brother's safety."

"Has he explained the cause of his long absence? Is this letter from him?"

"No, mademoiselle, it is from his mother!" said the domestic, lowering his voice, and looking cautiously around him.

Mademoiselle d'Auton quitted the window and hastened to the front door. "I cannot let you in, Philippe," she said, speaking through the keyhole; "my father keeps the keys under his pillow to prevent my opening the door to any one while he sleeps."

"Here is the letter, mademoiselle," said Philippe, gliding it under the door. "I entreat you to give it to your father immediately. The countess has just arrived, and is most anxious to see him."

"I will give him the letter at once," she replied, sadly; "but you know very well, Philippe, that he will not leave his house on any pretext. This letter will cause him much alarm and annoyance."

Mademoiselle d'Auton was right in her conjecture. Her father read the letter with as much consternation as if it had been his death-warrant.

"The countess requests you to go and see her, I suppose," said Louise, feigning ignorance.

"In her hotel, Rue Lepelletier!" cried the marquis, throwing himself back in his bed and drawing the curtains. "I will not go."

"Shall I go in your stead, father?" said Louise, anxious to see her lover.

"You!" cried the marquis, angrily, as he pulled the curtains violently back.

"Have I not been in the habit of leaving the house daily since you dismissed your last domestic?"

"Silence! Wouldst thou cause the death of thy unhappy father?"

"Oh! father, you know that I would shed the last drop of my blood to save you a tear. Do not be angry with me. I only proposed what I hoped would be agreeable to you. Your old friend, the Countess de

Chaville has arrived in Paris; she finds her eldest son in the power of a set of ruffians who know no mercy——"

"Will you hold your tongue?" said the marquis, tossing about in his bed. "I cannot bear any allusion to such horrible subjects, especially during the night. Who can say whose turn it may be next?"

"But Philippe is waiting outside for an answer."

"Philippe be hanged!" cried the marquis, almost beside himself; "he is continually roving about my door; I saw the glazier opposite looking at him the other day. Tell him I will not go; tell him anything you like, but send him away."

Louise communicated her father's determination to the old servant, who hastened away greatly mortified at the ill success of his mission. He had scarcely, however, been gone an hour when the marquis changed his mind, and resolved at all risks to obey the appeal of his old friend the Countess de Chaville. Shame at the thoughts of the resentment and contempt she would feel at his pusillanimity urged him to take this step. It cost him a severe struggle, but at length he screwed his courage to the sticking point and left the house, accompanied by his daughter. The first person he met was his neighbour and tenant, the glazier, who saluted him with a shout of laughter.

"Good day, marquis!" he cried, as the latter hurried on without taking the slightest notice of him. "Good day, Marquis d'Auton! Thou art come to life again then!"

"That wretch wishes to drink my blood!" said the marquis, increasing his speed.

"Halloo! citizen marquis!" shouted the glazier, annoyed that no notice was taken of his salute. "Keep a sharp look out, my lord! Thou mayst, perhaps, meet Madame Guillotine on thy road!"

"That Septembrist will set others on our track!" said the marquis, with a shudder. "Would to Heaven I had never left the house!"

"Be not alarmed, my dear father," replied Louise, "the man's ignorance and want of education must be his apology; he means nothing serious, rely upon it; he is merely amusing himself at our expense because we avoided him; their strange notions about equality make this class of people keenly susceptible of anything approaching to a slight from their superiors. Let us hasten; it is so early that we shall not find a soul upon the boulevards."

"Hark! are they not pursuing us? I hear cries! By Heavens, I almost fancied I heard my own name!"

"Nay, father, nay! They are the cries of the early market people!" said Louise, looking behind her every instant. "There is nothing to be alarmed at, I assure you."

"Hark!" cried the marquis, with increasing terror. "Ah! the bloodhounds are upon us!"

At this moment a group of young urchins turned the corner of the street and approached, shouting, "Death to the marquis! A la lanterne! A la lanterne!"

"My young friends, what do you wish?" said Louise.

"We wish for the destruction of all aristocrats!" replied the eldest, who was not thirteen years of age.

"But we are not aristocrats, but excellent citizens like yourselves," said Louise, anxious to get away from them.

"That's a crammer!" replied the urchin, placing the end of his thumb on his nose and extending and wagging his forefingers. "That cock won't fight! There is no mistaking an aristocrat; I could twig one anywhere. Your companion is the Marquis d'Auton! The glazier told us so."

"We are lost!" murmured the old nobleman.

"Father," whispered his daughter, "let us withdraw as quickly as possible; the cries of these urchins will attract attention to us."

"Let us arrest these aristocrats and take them to the section!" cried the eldest boy, flourishing his stick.

"Our patience is at an end," said, in a loud tone, Louise, who saw that the only means of delivering themselves from the persecutions of these young vagabonds was by frightening them. "Father, hesitate no longer to use your weapons! Fire upon the first who advances!"

This stratagem succeeded for the moment; the aggressors fled in all directions, but only to unite and follow at a greater distance.

"Courage, father!" said Louise, who trembled in spite of her efforts to appear calm.

On the Boulevard Montmartre they were encountered by ten or a dozen conscripts who had passed the night drinking in the cabarets. These men of sinister aspect, belonging to the lowest populace of the faubourgs, were capable of all excesses and all crimes—too cowardly to devote themselves of their own accord to the service of the country, too idle to work, too dissolute to submit willingly to the yoke of military discipline—they had not dared to resist the requisition, but they prolonged as much as possible their sojourn in Paris, where, on the strength of their titles of "soldiers of the army of the Rhine," they seemed to think themselves at liberty to act entirely as they pleased. They were the scourge of the capitol during the Reign of Terror. They wandered about the streets insulting the passers-by, and sometimes even drawing their sabres on them; they made no scruple of robbing and murdering people under the pretext of serving the republic. Those who presented themselves before the marquis and his daughter saw, at a glance, that they could profit by this rencontre to fill their empty purses.

"Who have we got here?" said one of the least drunken of the ruffians, as he placed himself before the marquis.

"He is a marquis!" cried the boys in chorus. "He is an aristocrat! Vive la Republique! Down with the aristocracy! A la lanterne! A la lanterne!"

"Oh, oh! you are a marquis, are you?" said the ruffian, puffing the smoke from his pipe in the unhappy nobleman's face.

"Every marquis merits death," said another. "Let us hang him to the lamp-post."

"A la lanterne!" cried the group of boys, who joined hands and danced the Carmagnole around the marquis, already more dead than alive. "A la lanterne!"

"Stop!" cried the man who had first spoken; "our proceedings must be regular. Let the accused answer for himself. Hast thou the villany to be a marquis?"

"Good citizens!" said Louise, who hastened to reply for her father——

"Wait a bit, my pretty aristocrat," said the ruffian, with an atrocious smile—"wait a bit; thy turn will come."

"My poor father is ill," she added, energetically; "you see he can scarcely support himself."

"What does that prove, my little aristocrat? Are marquises exempt from illness any more than other folks?—Search him!" he added, winking to his comrades. "Our first duty is to ascertain whether he has any treasonable papers upon him."

They searched the unresisting marquis, and divided his well-filled purse amongst them. They then took the rings from his fingers, and the silver buckles from his shoes. On a more minute examination, they found several papers upon him which they handed to the man who acted as their chief. He ran his eye through them, whistling, as he did so, the revolutionary air which the people had nationalised: "Ah! ça ira, ça ira, ça ira, les aristocrates à la lanterne!" Louise comprehended that her father was lost, on recognising amongst the papers seized upon him several letters from the Countess de Chaville. The boys began again to dance around the victim and repeat the horrible "Ca ira." The marquis uttered a cry, and thought that his last hour had come.

"The tribunal is going to pronounce its sentence?" said he who usurped the functions of judge. "It is duly proved that the accused is a marquis, an aristocrat, a royalist, who corresponds with the emigrants at Coblentz. A la lanterne!"

"Pardon, gentlemen! pardon, citizens!" cried the marquis, hustled by one and the other. "Life! life!"

"Citizens, pardon for my father!" cried Louise, throwing herself into the arms of the marquis and protecting him against his assailants. "Oh, for pity's sake, pardon!"

"Hang to the lamp-post this abominable aristocrat, who has money in his pockets, and armorial bearings on his snuff-box!" said the man who had pronounced the sentence.

"Vive la Republique!" cried, with all his strength, the Marquis d'Auton, who hoped that this profession of faith would operate in his favour. "Liberty, equality, fraternity, or death!" he shouted with that supreme energy which fear sometimes gives. But these cries only irritated his executioners, who struck him a blow on the mouth to oblige him to hold his tongue, until they could reduce him to eternal silence.

They removed his neckcloth and hurried him under the lamp-post.

"What are we to do for a rope?" said one of the ruffians.

"You have something in your pocket which will answer the purpose quite as well," replied the chief, drawing his finger significantly across his throat. "You are used to that sort of thing; you worked at the Abbaye in September. Away with your man to yon dark corner, and be quick about it!"

"Oh, my God! they are going to cut his throat!" cried Louise, frantically, as she clung with desperate energy to her father.

"Wilt thou be quiet, thou little squaller?" said one of the ruffians, seizing her round the waist, and pressing his bloated lips to her neck.

"Help!" she cried, disengaging herself from this odious embrace. "Help! murder! help!"

Suddenly a young man precipitated himself, sword in hand, in the

midst of the ruffians. They instantly released the marquis and stood at bay. It was the Chevalier de Chaville, who returning slowly along the boulevards, had heard and recognised the voice of Louise.

"Seize him!" cried the ruffian who took the lead, and who quickly recovered his self-possession on perceiving that the chevalier was alone and unsupported. "He shall pay dearly for this! Seize him, and throw him on his back! We will spoil that pretty face of his in detail!"

"The first who advances dies upon the spot!" replied the chevalier, flourishing his sword.

"Down with him!" said the ruffian to his comrades, not one of whom dared approach. "You are ten to one, and yet stand looking on. Have at thee, aristocrat!" he added, attacking the chevalier furiously, and keeping up a kind of running conversation while he fought. "We will —slit thy nose, and—crop thy ears—before we give thee—the *coup de grâce!*"

"Wretch! thou shalt do no more harm to any one!" replied Robert, as he passed his sword up to the hilt in the ruffian's bosom. "Bear witness!" he added, turning to the lookers-on—"bear witness all of you that I have but acted in self-defence against villains who wished to assassinate me."

"Sacre nom-de-Dieu!" cried one of the spectators, who was no other than Maclou, more intoxicated than ever, "these rascally scamps, who call themselves soldiers of the army of the Rhine, have actually had the audacity to attack the nephew of the illustrious Robespierre. That's him!" he added, pointing to the chevalier; "I know him as well as I know my own brother, and what is more, I have had a taste of his quality!"

This formidable announcement caused so much alarm amongst the actors and spectators that they began quickly to disperse. The cowardly conscripts were the first to disappear. Robert remained alone with the marquis, Louise, and Maclou, who had saved them without knowing it.

"Come away quickly!" said the chevalier, drawing the marquis and his daughter to a distance from the wounded man.

"Sacriste!" hiccuped Maclou, apostrophising the latter; "thou—art scored like a roast leg—of pork! Robespierre's nephew—knows—how—to handle his tools. It is as clear as mud that he worked at the Abbaye in September!"

"Robert," said the Marquis d'Auton, "I owe my life to you!"

"Ah!" murmured Robert, speaking to himself, "I am not so unhappy after all. I have lost, God forgive me, nearly half the sacred deposit committed to my charge, but I have saved Louise!..... Fatal play!—horrible play!—I detest thee, I curse thee!"

VIII.

THE LOVERS.

Present ills are less than horrible imaginings.—SHAKSPEARE.

The door of the Hotel de Chaville was happily open. Robert rushed into the house with the two victims whom he had just saved. In his haste he nearly ran against his mother, who received him in her arms with a cry of joy.

"My mother!" cried the chevalier, in an accent of alarm and despair. "You here, madame! Alas, alas!" he added, striking his forehead. "Why have you come? Why did you confide to me this fatal mission?"

"I have come, Robert," she replied, "to assist in the deliverance of your brother. Well, what have you to tell me?—Is he free?—Shall I see him?"

"You will see him — without doubt," replied the chevalier, with hesitation; "but he is not at liberty. To-day—to-day—he will certainly leave the prison, unless he wishes to remain there in spite of us."

"He must leave to-day, in order to escape his trial. You have seen him, Robert?—You have told him that I would make all the necessary sacrifices, that I would place at his disposal the sum which he demands, and more?"

"Yes, my mother!" faltered Robert, turning away his head. "I must leave you now," he added, after a painful pause; "but I will soon return—with—with him!"

"What! you think of leaving me already, Robert? You have scarcely spoken to me about the count. How heated you are, dear!" she added, as she noticed the drops of perspiration on his noble brow; "I never saw you so pale!"

"Well, my dear countess! I did not like to interrupt you sooner," said the marquis, who up to this moment had stood aloof.

"Ah, my old friend! I am delighted to see you again," she replied, shaking him warmly by the hand; "and our dear Louise also;" she added, kissing her. "I declare she is more beautiful than ever."

"Madame," said Louise, eagerly, "the chevalier has rendered us an immense service."

"More than a service!" interrupted the marquis, warmly; "we must call things by their right names. We owe our lives to the chevalier."

"I could not have acted otherwise than I did," replied Robert, eager to withdraw, and who often turned his eyes in the direction of the cellar. "Some ruffians laid hands upon Louise and her father. I was alone, but I had to do with dastards, and they fled."

"Save one!" said the marquis, in a low tone; "he remained upon the pavement weltering in his blood."

"Oh, if you had been witness of this scene, madame!" cried Louise, eager to speak in her lover's praise. "A band of hideous men, having somewhat the appearance of soldiers, stopped us on the boulevard, and after robbing my father of his money, rings, and snuff-box, were about to murder him in cold blood, when the chevalier dropped amongst them like an avenging angel. Alone, and unsupported, he put them all to flight."

"Chevalier," said the countess, with emotion, as she extended her hand to him, "I congratulate you on this noble action."

"Oh, he is brave as a lion!" cried the marquis, with unusual warmth, also holding out his hand.

"He has exposed his life to protect ours," added Louise, who did not think her father's gratitude sufficiently expansive. "He had a dozen demons in human shape against him, uttering the most atrocious threats, and yet he did not hesitate!"

"I shall never forget what we owe him," said the marquis. "He [illegible] be my son-in-law, in case we have the misfortune to lose the count."

"[illegible] lose my eldest son?" cried the unhappy mother. "Oh! marquis,

you cannot really entertain that frightful idea: no! God will not inflict such a dreadful blow upon me; he has seen my tears, he has heard my prayers, he will have pity upon me, he will restore to me my son."

"Heaven grant that it may be so, my poor countess!" said the marquis, taking her hand; "but you must be well aware that Ernest is in a frightful position: he is in the grasp of a set of wretches to whom mercy is a stranger. He is, alas! in prison, and about to appear before the revolutionary tribunal!"

"This day, this very day!" murmured Mademoiselle d'Auton, who, like her father, considered the count's doom all but sealed. "You have seen him, Robert, and you are the best judge whether our fears are groundless."

"Thank Heaven, they are groundless!" interrupted the countess, who shuddered in affecting to appear calm. "There is little or nothing to apprehend: a man has promised, for a hundred thousand francs in gold, to set my dear son at liberty, and enable him to quit France in safety. But speak to me, Robert," she added, astonished and distressed at his silence. "Relieve my mind from this torturing suspense, from these fearful forebodings which almost overwhelm me. Repeat to us that your brother will be out of prison to-day. I have no secrets from my old friend the marquis: I authorise you to tell everything. Speak! You have seen the count? You went from him to the person who agreed to save him? Have you remitted to that person the hundred thousand francs in gold? Answer, answer me, I implore you!"

"Mother," replied Robert, lowering his eyes, "my brother shall be restored to you, even if I give my head for his own!"

"Your head is equally precious to us, Robert!" said Louise, taking his hand timidly. "Preserve it for our sakes!"

Robert turned to the window to conceal his emotion.

"You hear, marquis, the assurances that Robert gives me?" said the countess, who was no less easy to calm than to move on the subject of her eldest son. "Robert has all but completed the bargain which is to open the doors of his brother's prison. I shall soon see my beloved Ernest again. We shall return to Coblentz together."

"I must now request permission to retire," said the chevalier, who meditated a speedy and mysterious retreat.

"Where are you going, Robert?" demanded Louise, as a painful presentiment flashed across her mind. "Why leave us?"

"Pray don't detain him, Louise," said the countess, thus saving the chevalier an evasive explanation; "he has a sacred duty to perform. Go, Robert, and may Heaven smile upon your efforts."

The chevalier felt such remorse on seeing his mother's confidence, and in accusing himself of basely deceiving her, that he remained motionless, not daring to raise his eyes upon Louise, who addressed touching questions to, and timidly sought to retain him. He was upon the point of throwing himself at his mother's feet, and of telling her how culpable he was: the presence of Louise prevented him from yielding to this impulse, and he bethought him that he ought first to merit his mother's pardon by saving her son.

"You have acted very indiscreetly, my dear countess, in returning to Paris!" resumed the marquis, after a pause; "you are upon the list of

emigrants! Alas! if they found you in France, you would not have three days to live!"

"Oh! what a comforter you are, marquis," replied the countess, with a melancholy smile. "I hope that they will not find me, my friend. I shall return, please God, with Ernest to-morrow night. I have for a guide and travelling companion an excellent man, a devoted royalist, who knows how to assume all characters, and who is in intelligence with both parties. Without his tact and infinite resources, I should have been compromised twenty times. You would act wisely, marquis, to profit by this opportunity and come with us. Canut tells me that we have nothing to fear returning. Think of your amiable Louise, and of the frightful fate she has escaped this day. Do not hesitate an instant to remove her from this scene of horrors. Paris is no longer a fitting or a safe abode for aught that is virtuous, innocent, or high-minded. Can you resist this appeal?"

"I cannot!" replied the marquis; "I will emigrate with you at all risks. My own and my daughter's safety demand it."

"Return, then, and make the requisite preparations for the journey."

"Excuse me, countess, I prefer remaining in your hotel until we leave. The burnt child dreads the fire! I nearly had my throat cut this morning in coming to see you. Those vile *sans-culottes* were about to kill me with as much deliberation as a butcher would slaughter a sheep. No, no, with your kind permission I will remain."

"Do so by all means," replied the countess. "In awaiting Philippe's return from the Conciergerie, where I have sent him with a letter to my son, I will continue my prayers for my child's safety."

During this conversation the chevalier had glided out of the room, followed at a distance by Louise. A painful suspicion had flashed across the poor girl's mind, and she resolved not to lose sight of her lover for an instant. Robert, who perceived that she was following him, made her a mute gesture to await him at the entrance of the cellar. He descended in the dark: he had no difficulty in finding the spot where he had concealed the remaining portion of the treasure, which still amounted to seventy-five thousand francs. Louise stood motionless as a statue, listening with an aching heart to the sound of gold which fell at intervals upon her ear. The chevalier returned laden with the spoil, and hoping to find Louise gone. She was still there, and as he was about to ascend the last step, she extended her arms across the door, and barred his passage.

"Pause, Robert!" said the weeping girl—"pause! Oh! let me save you from yourself!"

"Dear Louise!" he replied with an effort, "do not longer detain me: my brother's life is at stake!"

"It is doubtless noble and generous to devote oneself for a brother!" she said, letting her arms fall gently round his neck, "but—but, Robert, you are not yourself!"

"My Louise!" he said, kissing the hands to make them unloose their hold—"my Louise!"

"Robert, where are you going thus?" she murmured, in a trembling voice.

"To—to save my brother!"

"Oh! let me accompany you! I will watch over you as your guardian angel, Robert. By all our hopes of happiness let me accompany you!"

"Impossible, dearest Louise!" he said, in a voice almost choked by emotion—"impossible!"

"Since it is impossible, adieu! Robert, adieu!"

This word *adieu* seemed to strike him to the soul.

"I shall not be absent long," he faltered. "I shall hasten to return to my Louise! Oh! bless you! bless you, whatever fate may betide me!"

"Robert," she said—and sad forebodings shook her while she spoke—"dear, dear Robert, we shall never meet again!"

The chevalier shuddered, and was on the point of retarding the steps he contemplated taking for his brother's safety; but he remembered that the moments were counted. He turned once more towards Louise, who extended her arms to him. "Adieu! adieu!" she repeated. "We shall never meet again!"

INVITATION TO * * *.

BY CAROLINE DE CRESPIGNY.

COME to the spirit world away,
We have sojourned here too long,
Our souls are freed, and we dare not stay
In a world of woe and wrong.
Come away.
Why should we wait for the hand of Death?
We can vanquish his iron power;
Come, let us go ere the last faint breath
Shall bequeath to the dust its dower.
Come away.
I see in a bright and azure heaven
('Tis woven by angel hands)
A car by winged cherubs driven,
On a silver cloud it stands.
Come away.
Let us look our last on the darkened sky;
Let us hand in hand depart;
Our spirits are bound by the holiest tie,
That ever heart to heart.
Come away.
The love of the wise, and the gain of the knave,
We will leave to the children of earth;
To the pleasure and pains which the soul enslave
Bid adieu for a happier birth.
Come away.
Like a cloud in the sky, like a mist in the vale,
Let us vanish and fade from their sight;
For I see a new earth, and already inhale
An atmosphere pure and more bright.
Come away.

THE FAMILY JEWEL.

In all my life I remember nothing more beautiful than the state-room of my grandmother, such as it appeared to me in my childhood. This splendid apartment had, indeed, a peculiar charm for my infant mind; it inspired me, as it were, with a certain awe, and its not being meant, like the drawing-rooms of our days, for the reception of every-day's visitors, but only opened for the celebration of the highest family *fêtes*, endowed it with a solemnity which appeared almost sacred in my eyes. It was not exactly furnished in that style of Madame Pompadour's times, which—no one knows why—is now-a-days called rococo; it was rather a mixture of the fashions of different periods. There was a chest of drawers of the 17th century, curiously inlaid with ivory, and richly set out with painted china cups of modern date, bearing pathetic inscriptions, such as "A remembrance from a faithful heart," "From love and gratitude," and the like. There were sundry embroideries from the hands of grateful nieces and young granddaughters; a footstool covered with worsted work, representing an animal, something between a lamb and a dog; a gigantic fire-screen, with a Liliputian peacock embroidered upon it; splendid mirrors in antique gilt frames; modern chairs, with bouquets worked over them, and many other fine things of the same class.

But the greatest attraction of all, as well to myself as to my cousin, were, even in after years, the numerous family pictures with which the walls were adorned. There were gentlemen of the time when they wore pigtails, and of the period preceding it, up to the latest date; old gentlemen with cues and curls, from whose every feature shone forth the comfort and prosperity of a citizen of the good old times; and by their side younger gentlemen with blue dress-coats and yellow waistcoats. The gallery of ladies was still more complete: only, if the pictures were faithful portraits, it appeared, alas! that beauty was not amongst the hereditary gifts in our family. The most charming picture, indeed, was that of our grandmother herself, with her pretty little head, flowing curls, and a coquettish straw hat upon it.

Our grandmother would not conceal her satisfaction in hearing our warm admiration of her former beauty; nor did she, on the other hand, show herself displeased with our incredulous amazement at her ever having had such an elegant figure. Yet she was, even in her old age, a fine, stately old lady, but of rather ample dimensions.

Her picture hung side by side with that of our great-grandmamma. This good lady was represented already far advanced in years; her features, however, still bespoke that strong inflexible mind which made her the heroine of her family, as the reader will learn from the subsequent narrative.

In addition to two other great-great-grandmammas, of whom little can be said, there was the portrait of a stately clergyman's wife, apparently painted while she was still in the bloom of youth, with a tightly-laced waist, very red cheeks, a smiling countenance, and a very prominent hooked nose, like that of a parrot; her husband was represented

in his pontifical gowns, but looking towards his better-half with such a meek and resigned face, that he rather appeared like a lamb to be sacrificed than like a sacrificing priest.

"Tell us, grandmamma, who is that ugly old lady in the black gown who hangs over the stove?" we asked one day, after having inspected all the other pictures. "If she also belongs to our family, it appears that beauty is only a gift of recent date among us. It is quite a pity that she wears such a beautiful jewel! And what a romantic name she has!" There was written on the picture, in legible characters, "Mrs. Ann Maria Rumble, *née* Crookshank."

"Ugly!" cried grandmamma. "Oh you silly children, such is the folly of youth! You ought to remember she was a lady of a good old age when she was painted."

"But, grandmamma, you are also old, and yet look so much better."

"Never mind," she continued, somewhat pacified, "it is not every one that can boast of beauty, and my husband, God bless him! did not take me on account of my good looks. I wish that both of you together had only half the sense of your great-great-grandmother Mrs. Rumble. Do you not perceive what a remarkably intelligent face she has? If you only knew what this lady has seen and gone through during her lifetime, you would not judge so hastily. And as for her name, which does not please you, it was an honourable and respected name, and belonged to a family of note. Are you aware that her husband was a burgomaster? I doubt whether either of you will ever rise so high in the world. But wait, I will show you something that belonged to your ugly great-great-grandmother, as you call her."

The grandmother went, and soon returned with an antique small wooden box of a peculiar shape, bearing the date 1658. Upon the cover, King David was represented secretly watching Bathsheba; the greatest decorum, however, was observed. Bathsheba, as well as her numerous retinue, were modestly clad in the costume of the 16th century, and she was merely dipping her neat little feet into the water; King David, a crown on his head and the harp in his hand, wore under his royal mantle a jerkin and pantaloons of very large circumference. Opening this little box, grandmother produced from a secret drawer the identical jewel which was represented in the portrait of Mrs. Rumble. It was an amulet representing a bird of exquisitely beautiful workmanship of white enamel, with feathers tipped with gold and adorned with rubies. This jewel was attached to a fine but heavy gold chain, the links of which, though of strong make, seemed to have been stretched by having been pulled with great force.

"There is a story connected with it," said the grandmother, when we had for a while gazed at the jewel with great astonishment, "and if you will not tease me with your saucy remarks, you may read the manuscript in which pastor Still, her son-in-law, has told the story of this trinket from Mrs. Rumble's own statements."

"But why did not Mrs. Rumble write it down herself?"

"Because, like most ladies at that time, she had but little knowledge of writing."

"But, grandmamma, if we may believe all the best romances, the young ladies of that time learned it in convents."

"Your great-great-grandmamma was neither romantical nor brought up in a convent: she was a good Protestant."

"But the story, grandmamma, is surely a love-story, is it not?"

"Love-story—nonsense! Do you think that the girls were at that time as silly as they are now, when at fourteen they begin to meditate what they shall do with their foolish little hearts? and on their sixteenth birthday they will call out in the most approved style of broken-hearted sentiment: 'Farewell, ye golden dreams!' though, to do them justice, they generally are at last sensible enough, on receiving at the discreet age of twenty-four a proposal of marriage from some eligible gentleman, to do business quite in a matter-of-fact way, wisely accepting the offer first, and afterwards persuading themselves into a sweet conviction that the present one was their first and only love, which, unknown to themselves, all their former youthful dreams had merely foreshadowed. So, children, the story of the trinket of your great-great-grandmamma dates from a serious and gloomy period, when people would not think of such fooleries, nor had leisure for love-stories in their struggle through life."

At last grandmother consented to read the manuscript, the contents of which I here relate as faithfully as possible.

It was in the year 1659 when Mr. Balthasar Rumble was joined in wedlock to Ann Maria, daughter of the Reverend J. Crookshank. After the terrible thirty years' war the country had been a prey to famine, pestilence, and extreme poverty, and was frequently visited by marauders, who, unmolested, laid waste both towns and country. Although Mr. Crookshank had himself suffered severely in these evil times, yet he and his daughter did all in their power to comfort the poor and distressed among his flock, both by word and deed. On an occasion of this kind Mr. Rumble, whose province it was to visit the most afflicted localities, became acquainted with Miss Ann; and, perceiving that she was endowed with great virtue and intelligence, he made a formal proposal for her hand. Mr. Crookshank, who never would have dreamt of such an honour, gave a willing consent, being only too happy in those disturbed times to see his beloved child gain such a worthy protector. Not so Mrs. Rumble, the burgomaster's mother, a proud, haughty lady of noble family, who had long since resolved in her mind that her son should be united to a lady of noble birth. She was highly incensed at the mere idea of his marrying a poor clergyman's daughter, and obstinately refused her consent to the proposed union.

Mr. Rumble, who had always been an obedient son, was indeed deeply grieved at his mother's disapproval of his choice, yet he was not thereby prevailed upon to give up his bride, whose many endearing qualities, he hoped, would in the course of time win his mother's good-will. But such hopes were not realised; for on the 14th of November, 1658, Mrs. Rumble died, without having rejoiced the heart of her son by giving her maternal consent. According to the wishes of his bride, he allowed the usual time for mourning to expire, before the nuptials were celebrated, in the year 1659.

On the wedding-day, when Miss Ann had arrayed herself in her bridal dress, the bridegroom presented her with a very elegant trinket of exquisite workmanship—a small white bird with golden plumage, neatly executed in enamel, and attached to a heavy gold chain, which fitted close

round her neck. The chain was so skilfully and firmly joined together that it could not be opened either by force or ingenuity, except by an aigrette, which, for this purpose, was attached to it. This jewel he handed to her with these words: "My sweet bride, may this precious jewel, which an ancestor of my mother had brought from Italy to adorn his bride, and has since been worn by every bride of our family, be an emblem of our love, which may so firmly entwine our hearts that they shall only be put asunder by the same Almighty hand who now joins us together."

Miss Ann accepted the gift of her lover with pleasure and gratitude, but her heart felt sad at the sight of the jewel, which she resolved to wear only to please him. Mr. Rumble had engaged for her Juliana, the former lady's maid of his mother. This person, whilst assisting in the toilette of the bride, and just fastening the elegant chain round her neck, said to her, with a deep sigh: "God grant that this trinket may bring more blessing than its late mistress has bequeathed with it."

When the frightened bride asked what she meant, the maid confided to her that her late mistress had endeavoured with her last breath to dissuade her son from carrying out his intention; and then had handed to him the chain from her jewel-box, beseeching him with kindly words to present it to that young lady whom she would select as her daughter. But her son replied, with a firm voice, "Dear mother, I will place the jewel round the neck of the virtuous lady of my own choice, who is worthy of your love and blessing." When the mother saw that he was so steadfast in his resolution, she dismissed him with great wrath, and exclaimed in an angry voice, when he was gone, "If he hangs this precious jewel round the neck of that parson's wench, it shall be a curse to her. May she one day be strangled with it!" And, after this wicked speech, she expired, unreconciled.

This information sorely afflicted the bride; she would not grieve her husband by despising his gift, and yet she was seized with a feeling of horror at the accursed jewel so that she could scarcely venture to put it on. And the little bell—the only one which had remained on the steeple from the time of the war—was already summoning her to the altar, where her father was in attendance to bestow his blessing on their union. Then she thought of Almighty God, whose mercy is greater than the wrath of man, commended her soul and body to His protection, and bade the maid to fasten the chain.

Alluding to the grievous times in which their married life commenced, the father comforted them with the words of the psalm: "For Thou, Lord, art my hope; Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil happen unto thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways."

In the bridal chamber, Ann confided to her husband the dreadful story which Juliana had told her, and urgently besought him to pray with her, that the curse of the harsh mother might be averted by the grace of God.

They lifted up their hearts in fervent prayer to the Almighty and ever-merciful God, who had of old turned away the curse from the innocent wife of Tobym, and changed the malediction of Balaam into a blessing,

that He might in like manner protect their union, which had begun in His fear and love, from the malediction which the mother in her infatuation had pronounced upon them; that He might vouchsafe to be gracious unto them, and grant in His mercy that in the life to come they might bring a blessing to the mother who had cursed them. And when they had thus prayed, they saw a very bright star, whose rays fell right into their chamber. Then their hearts became lighter, and were filled with comfort, and they began cheerfully to look forward, with a spirit full of hope, to their future life.

Twelve years had elapsed, and their only daughter, Barbara, was in her eleventh year when Mr. Rumble and his wife returned from a christening which had taken place at the house of a friend of theirs. All on a sudden the cry resounded through the place: "The red cloaks! the red cloaks!"*

Mr. Rumble had scarcely hastened away in order to collect a body of men against these savage and cruel hordes who were burning and plundering the land, when a troop of them attacked his house, struck down two of his servants, and began to search for booty. Mrs. Ann took her little daughter in her arms, but could not escape; she was thrust with her maids into a chamber, while the rest of the house was ransacked.

There she sat with her child and her weeping maids in a dark night, and in great anguish. It would not have been difficult to descend into the yard, but one of the red cloaks stood sentinel there. Little Barbara, who had thrown her arms round her mother's neck, suddenly exclaimed:

"Oh, mother, your chain! Pray take off your chain, or they will take it from you."

Not until this moment had Mrs. Ann been aware that she was still arrayed in her best attire, and that she wore the chain with the jewel round her neck. But the aigrette, which alone could open it, lay far off in her jewel-box. Then with horror and amazement she remembered the curse of her mother-in-law, which was now about to be accomplished; for, judging from the habits of these ruffians, she could only expect that they would tear the jewel from her neck, and, not being able to open the chain, would miserably strangle her.

Not knowing where her husband was during this dreadful confusion, and expecting every moment that the red cloaks would rush into the apartment, she, as well as her maids, tried with all their might to unfasten the chain, but in vain.

In extreme anguish and the fear of instant death, she lifted up her eyes towards heaven and fancied she again saw the same star which had shone into her bridal chamber twelve years ago. This revived her courage, and calling on the aid of the Almighty she once more pulled violently at the chain. And, behold! the strong links gave way, and the chain was stretched in such a manner that she could pass it over her head. Thus was she relieved from her greatest fear, and she began to hope that they might find some means of escape. Hearing that the marauders were making a great noise in a distant part of the house, she

* The "red cloaks" (Rothmäntel) are the same savage hordes which Jellachich lately brought to Vienna, together with his Croats. They are also called Serrazaner, and are natives of Morlacchia in Dalmatia.

endeavoured to bribe the sentinel in the yard with the jewel, to which the maids added their necklaces. The fellow being irritated at getting so small a share of the booty, was induced by the jewel to allow herself, her child, and the maids to escape into the yard. But this treasure, indeed, did him more harm than good, for in the same night he quarrelled about it with one of his boon companions, and was slain.

Mrs. Ann hid herself with her child in a cellar, where they remained in great fear and trembling. Suddenly they heard joyful shouts, and above all the voice of Mr. Rumble, who called for them; whereupon they hurried from their hiding-place into his arms. He had been successful in collecting a regular force of troops, at the sight of which the marauders suddenly took to flight with their plunder, which they had hastily collected. Great was now their joy and gratitude for their almost miraculous preservation, and when Mrs. Rumble related to her husband by what means she had effected her escape, the star again shed its soft rays towards the place where they stood, and right beneath it, at her feet, something glittered on the ground, and behold! it was the family jewel.

These bandits had, indeed, done great damage to the whole town, especially to the house and property of Mr. Rumble; but by the industry and economy of his wife, and under the blessing of God, all was again richly restored; and Mrs. Ann and her husband attained a good old age in peace and happiness.

Mrs. Ann never again wore the jewel which had been the cause of such danger and the means of her deliverance; only in her portrait she had it represented as a memorial of the high value in which she held it. Before her death she handed it to her daughter under the solemn condition that it should remain for ever the property of the eldest daughter of the family, and be preserved as a sacred heirloom. And as her husband's mother had attached a curse to it, so she bequeathed with it the blessing, that, as long as the jewel remained in the possession of the family, peace and happiness would never depart from it.

This is the story of the family jewel. If it is deficient in romantic interest, it has at least the merit of being true.

We were in a rather serious mood when grandmamma dismissed us. In taking leave of her, I once more turned round and said:

"But, grandmamma, there is still a love-story in it; if Mr. Rumble had not fallen in love with Miss Crookshank there would have been no jewel, no curse, and no blessing."

"You saucy puss," the old lady said, "you may wait long enough before I tell you another story."

XI.

In a small room in the nunnery, dedicated by its pious founder to Saint Winifred, sat two females, at noontime on the same day mentioned in the last chapter. The elder had a dignified though gentle mien. From her features those livelier traits which give life and character had disappeared, and marble itself seemed scarcely more white, more rigid at the first glance of the beholder; but a closer inspection might trace the lines marked by the struggles to gain mastery over strong emotions. True, there was no wrinkle on the open brow, but there were the pinched corners of the eye, and an occasional though slight convulsion of the thin compressed lips; even now the rest of the face was composed, as though the muscles worked involuntarily, just as a child sobs in its sleep from the grief it is no longer conscious of. She was leaning back, apparently exhausted, and her long white dress, which was of the monastic order, gave her the appearance of a saint fit to be canonised. Her hands clasped before her were pressed in those of her companion, who, sitting on a low stool at her feet, gazed on her with affectionate sympathy. This was a maiden of much loveliness, whose apparel clearly showed that she had not, like the other, taken vows of seclusion from the world. Her rich, light brown locks, of luxuriant growth, contrasted with the close cap and shortened hair parted simply across the forehead of the recluse; yet was the contrast not disadvantageous to the latter, so becoming was it to her more subdued beauty, and the settled melancholy of her look. The first of the two personages was the lady abbess; the other being the young Ediva, daughter to the famous Hereward, Lord of Brunne. The subject of their late conversation had evidently been one of painful interest, and a deep silence had followed. After a while, however, the abbess partially raised herself from her recumbent posture, and laid her hand gently on the maiden's head.

"Alas! my child," she said, with a sweet, mournful voice, "vain indeed are the struggles our frail natures make to overcome these earthly troubles, though they be but as shadows and pass from us even as we gaze upon them. A sudden woe—and the vigils of long years, mingled with the incense of a thousand prayers, are bootless—the heart renews its painful throbbings, and pleads for the indulgence of its weakness."

"And surely, dearest lady, for griefs like yours, this at least is permitted."

"Urge not that," rejoined the abbess. "Who knows but that each repining tear may blot out one shed for sin? What matters it, this outward garb, if all within fits not? Oh! Edward, saintlike king! could I but emulate thy soul, then might I with calm contemplation regard these trials, which now I scarce dare think of, lest flesh and spirit fail together."

"Would I might help to bear them!" said Ediva. "But I can only weep, which serves rather to keep them in remembrance."

"Thou share my sorrows, little one!" said the abbess. "Thy tender leaves, poor plant, may hardly bear themselves the rude assaults of these

northern blasts. Far be this from thee. 'Tis not permitted for a mortal to comfort Editha, or avert the bolt from her unhappy house—nay, that has fallen already on it; dire ambition, ever its bane and sin, rested not from its toil until its victims, placed on the highest pinnacle of power, should one by one be plunged the deeper."

"And yet how glorious their fate, even in ruin!" said the young girl with enthusiasm. "Ever will the house of Godwin live great in our annals; and after ages will hold it worthy of the race whence Alfred sprung."

"Ah! a fame purchased with bloody lines and bloody ends," returned the abbess, "and mark the doom, as it fell heavily on each. Godwin, my father, whose towering and mighty will swept every obstacle from his path, until the Neatherd's son became the most powerful of Britain's princes, saw yet during his lifetime the speedy downfal of the edifice he had reared, through the dissensions of his sons. This did he prophesy, miserable old man, humbled and smitten at an age when all should honour the grey head. As he said, even so it came to pass. First, Sweene, a self-imposed exile; then Sostig, fierce and lawless, slain in an unnatural war against his brother; and now, Harold and Gurth—the last and best—their fate is yet too green. O Harold! O my brother! in an evil hour was the golden circlet put upon thy brow." The afflicted lady pressed her hands tightly across her forehead, then, after a pause, continued: "Such, Ediva, is our sad history. I only now remain, the mourner. Nor has my life been an exception to this list of woes; forced from retirement—a timid girl—the victim of the aspiring aims of sire and brothers, I, most unwillingly, was by them raised into a station higher even than their own. They placed upon my head a crown I coveted not, and put his hand in mine, who took me not for love but fear. Wedded, but no union. Wife! husband! mocking titles were they to me. Never was it mine to know the endearing fondness of a mother. Never to see the glad father kiss his child, and smile on her who gave it to his arms, making that day a double, surer bond of love. Yet think not I reproach him. 'Twas not the fault of Edward. Our destiny required it; and let me bow my head meekly and resigned before the justly chastising hand."

But, notwithstanding her last words, a few bitter tears coursed down her cheeks as she recollected the wrong done to her woman's nature. Ediva could not speak, but drew nearer to the mourner, and repeatedly kissed the hands which were clasped before her. The loving action restored the abbess to herself.

"Thanks, my gentle child," she said, and stooped to press her lips upon the brow of the fair girl. "I have no right thus to parade my griefs before thee, but thou hast visited me at a hapless time. Let me, however, forget them awhile in talking of thine own affairs. Was it not told me that yesterday thou didst receive a missive from thy father?"

"Yes, dearest lady; a letter brought me by my father's henchman."

"Is it not permitted me to learn its contents, that thou hast withheld them from me? Think not I have become indifferent to the concerns of those I love."

"I dared not, lady, save with your permission, bring my poor affairs before your notice—troubled as you then were. Here is the writing."

"Done, I will answer for it, by another hand than his own," said the abbess. "It is a marvel how little clerkship is esteemed by the great and noble of the land."

"Yet, honoured lady, the turmoil of the times is their excuse; that they know not how to wield the pen, through the hardier exercise of the sword."

"Did not the great Alfred do both?" asked the abbess. "And does my little pupil decry that gift which cost her such pains to learn? But let us see what is indited in thy father's scroll:

"'To Ediva, the daughter of my beloved Turfrida,—This, my dear daughter, after kind greeting, is to inform you that I am well in health. In regard to thyself, fain as I would have thee with me, there is here no place fit for thee, or so safe as in the asylum where thou art. Remain, therefore, my dear one, for a season in patience, knowing that as the father longs to embrace his only child, he will not protract the meeting longer than need urges. Greet the honoured and noble lady who spreads over you the wings of her protection, and name unto her my desire. For the rest, the people flock to us, and for our cause there is great hope. The sword I wear has, by the holy Thurlstan, been duly blessed before the high altar. Farewell. The protection of Heaven be over you. This from your father, 'HEREWARD, Lord of Brunne.'

"Welcome, my child, is this permission for thy stay," said the abbess, kindly, as she finished reading the above concise and primitive epistle. "And here, as thy father tells thee, thou hast at least a safe abiding place. The Norman duke himself, sanguinary as he is, even had he not already enough embrued his hands in the blood of my kindred, would yet respect the dwelling wherein the widow of his kingly benefactor chose to hide her sorrows. Yes, thou art safe—safe from all the outer troubles which assault the children of the world. Would that, with a timely wisdom, thou wouldst for aye avoid them, and here, in strict seclusion, in the service of thy God, forget them."

To this proposition the maiden, however, was silent, and the abbess continued:

"Wherefore dost thou pause? Is it still to retain the painted joys of earth, thinking them real; or hast thou, thoughtless wanderer, plucked from its bosom so many flowers sweet and lovely, feeling no thorns? How vain and foolish is the heart, that naught can wean affection from these temporal things, save hard adversity, which must strip off one by one the gaudy coverings of sin, and show the rottenness beneath."

"And yet, dear lady," said the girl, "even within these holy walls, yourself cannot forget the pang of human woes. There is still the bond which ties, and the sympathy which will be felt; and is not the cry to be heard, strong and loud, though we shut our ears never so close, that being mortal, we must share alike mortal feelings, whether in the world or in the cloister?"

A sharp expression as of pain crossed the features of the lady superior on being thus reminded of her own sorrows. She resumed, however, almost instantly the rigidly calm exterior usual to her; though not before Ediva saw she had unwittingly spoken a harsh truth.

"Alas!" she said, repentingly, "what sin has my thoughtless tongue been guilty of?"

"It was not meant to pain me," rejoined the abbess, gently. "But to resume. Think not, my child, I sought to urge, that while we renounce the feverish excitements of the gay trifler, we can or would close our hearts to human emotions. Yet, mark the different workings of the like-named passions on the soul. Hope, which is built on holy fear, points to a happy and a sure fulfilment; while to the world's poor devotee it leads but on a devious path, and ends in disappointment. Grief, which chasteneth the saint, hath only for the sinner repining and despair. So, too, with all the various elements forming our being: in name only alike, they bring results bitter or sweet, even as they that travail with them are wise in choosing heaven or earth. Dost thou consider this?"

"Ah! dear lady," answered the maiden frankly, "I should belie my heart did I say, that of my own free will I would leave my father's house to dwell for aye in a nun's cell. I am a warrior's daughter, and have too much a wild and restless spirit e'er to fit me for the calm, unvaried round of duties here performed."

As the abbess was about to reply the door opened, and a nun of sour and forbidding aspect entered the apartment.

"What wouldst thou with me, sister Genevieve?" asked the superior, turning to the new comer.

"Holy mother," answered the nun, in a voice harsh and unpleasant as her looks, "they have brought hither a wounded youth to be tended of his hurts. Thus do men, reckless of their lives, seek to cumber the house of peace."

"Alas! that so it is," said the abbess; "yet we may not refuse them in their extremity our good offices. Who accompanieth the youth?"

"Two men."

"Let them convey their charge to the dwelling of Ives the Falconer, for thee knowest, sister Genevieve, it were not seemly to admit him here. Stay—I will myself go with thee, that I may judge what simples he requires."

The abbess rose, and, followed by sister Genevieve, left the chamber. As Ediva was speculating upon the age, appearance, and birth of the wounded young man—a maiden's musings—a pretty damsel appeared.

"'Tis Sweene," said she, eagerly, as she tripped forward.

"Who—he that is hurt?"

"No, no, thank heaven," rejoined the girl; "him I know not, but guess to be one whom the grim Hernbore, Sweene's master, hath adopted."

"Are they alone?" asked Ediva.

"No. There is an old man with them, whom I take to be one Guttorm, having heard Sweene speak of a companion, old, hasty in temper, rough, yet so attached to him that they are rarely separate."

"Old and ill-tempered?" cried Ediva. "A choice companion, truly."

"I spied them from the leaded turret," continued Githa, "whither I had gone to breathe the fresh air, and look on the blue sky, things right scarce here in the nunnery. Seeing them, I stayed not to reason with myself upon their coming, but flew to the portal wicket, and heard the lady abbess without order them hence to the falconer's cottage. Is it not provoking, when the sick youth might have been better tended here?

How it would have relieved this weary round of matins, nones, and vespers."

"Ay, doubtless, and with Sweene also here," suggested Ediva.

"And if I own it, lady, it is no shame for one's own bachelor. Besides, I may well wish the place more cheerful, for there seems a very witchcraft about it, which turneth every one dull that comes within the magic circle of its influence."

"Now, fie on thee, Githa, and the saints preserve us!" exclaimed the young lady, fervently. "Surely it was the suggestion of the evil one prompting thy tongue, which compared the holy seclusion of this consecrated house to a magician's spell."

"Rather," replied Githa, "the promptings of a spirit immured in cells and cloisters, longing for the green meads of Lincoln. My merriest laughs, dear lady, here return to me in melancholy wails; and I dare not utter a jest, for the *refrain* comes on my ears like a funeral dirge."

"Truth," said Ediva, with a gentle sigh. "Yet, Githa, this is our sanctuary, and the lady abbess is a kind and dear protectress."

"Yet doth her presence add to the gloom. There is that on her face which says, 'Mirth never shall come here.' I never see her but I am fit to weep with sadness."

"Alas! poor lady."

"Then for another spur to aid our spirits," continued the damsel; "take we the opposite of the lady mother, even the good sister Genevieve. She is a compound of crab and camomile, crooked in body, motioned like an ape, sour in her looks, unpleasant in her breath, and with a voice so cracked as to set the teeth on edge."

"Hush, mad wench," cried Ediva, laughing. "Should she hear thee, thou art like to find she hath not shrewish qualities for naught. As I live that is her step, and here she comes."

The unamiable nun re-entered, and as she did so, cast an eye full of envy and malice upon the blooming beauty and joyous faces of the two young girls, as they now endeavoured to compose their features with a somewhat whimsical attempt to look demure.

"I trust, sister Genevieve, the young man is not much hurt," said Ediva.

"Doth it concern thee aught, maiden?" inquired the nun, sharply. "Or dost thou inquire merely from the vain curiosity which is bred of idleness?"

"Surely, sister Genevieve, it is allowed us to express our hope that sickness is not unto death. And oh! 'tis a hard thing to die in one's youth."

"Those that live aright have no fear of death," remarked sister Genevieve.

"Right, sister," put in Githa; "and to those that be old and ugly, we will wish them good speed on their journey to another world. But now the case is altered—here is a young man, and a right comely one too, that might grace a lady's side, either at the banquet-hall or the hawking-field. Truly I would not for my best wimple that he should come to harm."

"Mother of Jesus! hear not this flippant creature! What vanities are these!" and the nun with pious horror raised her eyes to the ceiling, whereon they remained fixed for some seconds; a spectacle which caused the mischief-loving Githa some difficulty in repressing her mirth. The

sound, however, indistinct as it was, had the effect of speedily restoring the recluse to her former self, showing at the same time that her heavenly contemplation had not influenced the hardness of her look, or softened the acerbity of her temper. "Your unseemly conduct, damsel, ill befits the sanctity of this house, or the presence of its devoted servant," she said. "Parley not with me, nor let mine ears be polluted longer with sounds of wanton laughter." Proceeding towards a small cabinet, she then took from it some dried herbs, when, as she was about to turn and depart, suddenly a thrill of pain shot through her frame, and she would have fallen to the ground, had not Ediva stepped forward and supported her. She shrank, however, from the touch, for so was the feeling of peevish ill-nature engrafted in her, that even the offer of assistance, so gentle and well-intentioned, served but to rouse her spleen. "I ask not help," she said, "from one who waits only till I am gone to turn my infirmity into ridicule. Mischievous that thou art," she added, turning towards Githa, who was engaged in gathering up the herbs which had fallen from the nun's grasp as she had endeavoured to save herself from falling, "lo! thy careless hands are mixing the houseleek and the plantain." The good sister was about to stoop, in order to prevent the well-natured officiousness, when another spasm caused her to draw herself upright, and, in that posture, unwillingly to receive from Ediva the scattered leaves, which else must have remained as they lay, at least so far as any physical power of her own was concerned. "The delay ye have caused me," she then said, as she slowly made her exit, "may prove prejudicial to the youth for whose use these medicines are intended; but I leave ye, maidens—leave ye to make merry with the untoward gait and sufferings of sister Genevieve."

"She hath the true spirit of spleen," said Githa, after listening to the retiring steps of the nun, "and blames right and left, whether it be just so to do or not. We caused her no delay. Heaven forbid we should! Yet she charges us with it, when the sole hindrance was a cramp of the limbs."

"I marvel," said Ediva, "that the lady abbess can endure a creature so perverse near her person!"

"It can only be by way of penance," rejoined the handmaiden, "just as a monk bears flagellation, or a patient takes bitter physic, for the good of his body. The excellent virtues of patience and humility must be well exercised in making sister Genevieve a companion."

"But tell me, Githa, wouldst thou not gladly have taken the sister's place, and thyself have accompanied the abbess to the falconer's house?"

"Nay; were it but for the seeing of Sweene," replied Githa, "I would leave it to the young man's skill and promptness to meet with me as he might. But, dear lady," she added, sadly, "my father fought at Senlac, and alas! I have not since heard of him."

"Dry thine eyes," said Ediva. "Thou thinkest, then, that Sweene may have learnt his fate?"

"Yes, lady."

"I will petition the lady abbess on her return that thou mayest visit this lover; and should he bring ill-tidings of thy father, he, better than another, may at least comfort thee for the loss. In the mean time let us to our tapestry work, lest it be said that we are more nimble with our tongues than our fingers."

THE CRIMEA.

The Crimea presents itself to us at the present moment as a region of peculiar interest. It is a land of peculiar fertility, wondrously fine climate, and unbounded natural resources. "The ever-verdant laurel," says Pallas, "grows beside the olive, the pomegranate, the fig, or the date-tree; high hills, masses of rock, streams and cataracts, verdant fields and woods, and the sea, that bounds the horizon, renders the landscape equal to any imagined or described by poets. The simple life of the good Tartars, their cottages cut in the solid rock, and concealed by the thick foliage of surrounding gardens, the flute of the shepherd, his flock scattered on solitary hills, remind the stranger of the golden age."

The Crimea is peninsulated, compact, well capable of being held for a long time against superior forces. It has been made the seat of Russian naval and mercantile strength in the Black Sea, which, indeed, it so dominates, that whoever holds the Taurian peninsula ought also to be masters —as far as man can be so—of the treacherous Euxine. Almost all are more or less familiar through books of modern travel with its more remarkable features in the present day, and its striking reminiscences of the past. Richly endowed by nature, the Taurian Chersonese, or Crimea, has always been coveted by the peoples of Europe and Asia. Pastoral nations have contended for possession of its mountains; commercial nations for its ports and its renowned Bosphorus; warlike peoples have pitched their tents amid its magnificent valleys; all have coveted a footing on that soil, to which Greek civilisation has attached such brilliant memories.

We have Sebastapol*, with its docks, and arsenals, and fortifications, so long threatening the Sultan's empire, and now keeping the fleets of three nations at a respectable distance—we have the ruins of Kherson, an Heraclean colony, founded 600 years B.C. on the cape of same name—Inkermann, the city of caves and sepulchral grottoes—Balaclava, the Cembalo of the Genoese, now the humble capital of a little Greek colony founded in the reign of Catherine II., numbering several villages with 600 families, and a pretty town surrounded by mountains with balconied houses and trees rising in terraces one above the other—Nicolaief, with its museum of antiquities—Baghtchi Sarai, or the garden-palace of the Tartars, the ancient capital of the Khans, which, previous to the Muscovite conquest, could vie in power and opulence with the great cities of the East, and is even now the most interesting town in the Crimea, its mosques, shops, and cemeteries, and still more so, its courts, gardens, and kiosks of the harem of the old palace, reminding the traveller of the best parts of Aleppo, Baghdad, and Damascus—the mountain of Tchufut Kalah, the stronghold of the Karaïm or Karaït Jews—the Russian capital of Simpheropol, cold, cheerless, and monotonous, upon the usual plan of comprising ten times as many houses as it possesses—Mangup Kalah, a mountain stronghold which has played an important part in all the revolutions of the Crimea, and has been in turns possessed by Goths, Turks, and Tartars—the forests, rocks, gardens, villages, villas,

* The modern Greeks pronounce the *b*, *v*—hence Sevastapol for Sebastapol.

and palaces of Aloupka—Ialta, with its steamers, its elegant buildings, and handsome hotels, the abode of opulence and pleasure—Soldaya, or Su Tagh, "mountain water," whose once animated harbour is now deserted, and grass grows in the streets, trodden of yore by the elegant Greeks of the Lower Empire, the victorious Romans, and the proud citizens of Genoa—Theodosia, the Caffa of the Genoese, and the splendid metropolis of Genoese dominion in the Black Sea, now stripped of all political and commercial importance—Kertch, a Russian town of yesterday, which has risen upon the ruins of Panticapea, the most celebrated of all the Milesian colonies, and whose ancient glories it has been in vain attempted to revive—such are only a few of the spots of interest and mark contained in this most favoured country.

The power and prosperity attained by the different colonies which have at various times held the Crimea, or portions of that remarkable peninsula, alone attest to its political and commercial importance. The Milesians founded their first colonies in the middle of the seventh century before Christ, in the eastern part of Tauris—the little region which we now call the peninsula of Kertch. Theodosia, Nymphea, Panticapea, and Mermikion, were erected on the shore of the little peninsula, and served as seaports for the thriving colonists.

The agricultural prosperity which attended upon the labours of the Milesians was quickly known in Greece, whence it occasioned fresh and important emigrations. The Heracleans soon followed, and selected for the site of their settlement the little peninsula of Trachea. Thus were laid the foundations of the celebrated republic of Khersonesus, or Kherson, which subsisted great and prosperous for more than 1500 years, and the capital of which having become the temporary conquest of a Grand-Duke of Russia, in the tenth century, was the starting-point of that great religious revolution which completely changed the face and the destinies of the Muscovite empire.

Leucon having relieved the Athenians of the thirtieth imposed on exported corn, the Cimmerian peninsula became the granary of Greece, and merchants flocked to Theodosia and Panticapea, where they procured at the same time wool, furs, and all those salted provisions which still constitute one of the chief riches of Southern Russia.

Despite the dangerous vicinity of the Sarmatians, the kingdom of the Bosphorus (Bosporus cimmerius) enjoyed perfect tranquillity for above 300 years, and through a steady and rational policy increased in prosperity and riches, until the conquest of Greece by the Romans subverted all the commercial relations of the East. At that period the Bosphorians, attacked by the Scythians, and too weak to resist them, threw themselves into the arms of the celebrated Mithridates, who turned their state into a province of Pontus, and bestowed it as an appanage on his son Makhares.

After the defeat and death of her implacable enemy, Rome maintained the traitor Pharnaces in possession of the crown of Bosphorus; but the new princes' sovereignty was merely nominal, and the successors of the Pontic princes reigned only in accordance with the caprice of the Roman emperors.

About the middle of the first century after Christ the Alans entered the Tauris, devastated the greater part of the country, and entirely de-

stroyed Theodosia, which had offered them some resistance. They were followed by the Goths, who in their turn became masters of the peninsula. But far from abusing their victory, they blended their race with that of the vanquished, founded numerous colonies on the vast plains north of the hilly region, and followed their natural bent for a sedentary life and rural occupations. The Tauric Khersonese now entered on a fresh period of tranquillity and agricultural prosperity.

The remote and inaccessible position of the little republic of Kherson, preserved its independence during all these early barbarian invasions. In Diocletian's time, the Khersonites, whose dominions extended over nearly the whole of the elevated country, had concentrated in their own hands almost all the commerce that existed between the Tauris and the shores of the Black Sea. Their republic was the most powerful state of the peninsula, when war broke out between them and the Sarmatians, who had already seized the kingdom of the Bosphorus, and given it to a king of their own nation. The struggle between the two rival nations lasted nearly a century, and the Sarmatians having been at last expelled, the Bosphorians again enjoyed some years of freedom and quiet. But the peace was not of long duration. The unfortunate peninsula was soon visited by the most violent tempest that had yet desolated it. The Huns, from the heart of Asia, came down to the Asiatic side of the strait, and soon the terrified Bosphorians beheld those furious hordes traversing the Sea of Azof, which had for a while arrested their progress.

The ancient kingdom of the Milesians was then extinguished for ever (A.D. 375). The numerous colonies of united Goths and Alans shared the same fate, and all the rich agricultural establishments of the country were reduced to ashes. Still, protected by their isolated position, and by the rapidity with which the invading torrent passed by, rushing towards the western regions of Europe, the Khersonites alone escaped the devastation.

The Tauris was still suffering under the effects of the frightful disasters inflicted on it by the Huns, when it was again ravaged by their disbanded hordes, after the death of Attila. The Khersonites were now in jeopardy, and in their alarm they sought the protection of the Eastern empire. Justinian, who then reigned at Constantinople, acceded to their request, but he made them pay dear for the imperial protection. Under pretence of providing for the defence of the country, he erected the two strong fortresses of Alouchta and Gourzoubita on the southern coast, and the republic of Kherson became tributary to the empire.

In the latter part of the seventh century (A.D. 697) the Crimea was invaded by the Khazars, hordes that having accompanied the Huns, had settled in Bersilia (Lithuania), and had been formed into an independent kingdom by Attila himself. For the period of a century and a half, the Khazars, who gave their own name (Khazaria) to the peninsula, held sway in Southern Russia from the Danube to the foot of the Caucasus.

The next dominant power was that of the Petchenegues, and under their sway the trade and commerce of the peninsula revived, and the ports of the Crimea supplied the merchants of the Lower Empire with purple, fine stuffs, embroidered cloths, ermines, leopard skins, furs of all kinds, pepper, and spices, which the Petchenegues brought from the regions of the Kaban, the Cyrus, and the Araxes.

The dominion of the Petchenegues lasted 150 years, and then they themselves experienced the fate which they had inflicted on the Khazars. Assailed by the Komans, whom the growth of the Mongol power had expelled from their own territory, they were beaten and forced to return into Asia. The Komans made Soldaya their capital; but they had scarcely consolidated their power when they were obliged to give place to other conquerors, and seek an abode in regions further west.

With the expulsion of the Komans ceased all those transient invasions which dyed the soil of the Crimea with blood during ten centuries. The various hordes that have left nothing but their name in history, were succeeded by two remarkable peoples: the one, victorious over Asia, had just founded the most gigantic empire of the middle ages; the other, issuing from a trading city of Italy, was destined to make the Crimea the nucleus of all the commercial relations between Europe and Asia.

With the Mongul invasion of 1226 the empire of the Tsars entered on that fatal period of servitude and oppression which has left such pernicious traces in the national character of the Muscovites. Russia, Poland, and Hungary were successively overrun by the hordes of the celebrated grandson of Genghis Khan; the Crimea was added to their enormous conquests, and became with the southern provinces of Russia, under the name of Little Tartary, the cradle of a potent state, which maintained its independence down to the end of the eighteenth century.

Under the yoke of the Mongols the Crimea, after being oppressed at first, soon recovered; Soldaya was restored to the Christians, and soon proved that the resources of the country were not exhausted, and that nothing but peace and quiet were wanted to develop the elements of wealth with which nature had so liberally endowed it. In a few years Soldaya became the most important port of the Black Sea, and one of the great termini of the commercial lines between Europe and Asia.

The greatness of Soldaya was, however, of short duration: another people more active, and endowed with a bolder spirit of mercantile enterprise than the Greeks, came forward about the same period, and concentrated in its own hands the whole heritage of the great epochs that had successively shed lustre on the peninsula from the day when the Milesians founded their first colonies on the Cimmerian Bosphorus. Being already possessed of important factories in Constantinople, the Genoese had long been aware of the circumstances of the Crimea, and the immense resources it would place at the disposal of enterprising men, who should there centralise for their own profit all the commercial relations of Europe with Russia, Persia, and the Indies.

The rivalry which then existed between them and the Venetians accelerated the execution of their projects, and after having secured the territory of ancient Theodosia, they laid the foundation of the celebrated Caffa, through which they became sure masters of all the southern coasts of the Crimea. Other equally profitable conquests were subsequently made beyond the Peninsula. The galleys of the republic entered the Palus Mæotis; Tana, on the mouth of the Don, was wrested from the Tartars; a fortress was erected at the mouth of the Dniester; factories were established in Colchis and on the Caucasian coast; Amasarah, Trebizond, and others ports on the coast of Asia Minor were garrisoned,

and communications with the Mediterranean and the far east were kept up by a series of fortresses, which still ever and anon surprise the traveller. The Genoese colonies thus became the general emporium of the rich productions of Russia, Asia Minor, Syria, Persia, and the Indies; they monopolised for more than two centuries all the traffic between Europe and Asia, and they set an example of how easily all this was to be brought about, which no modern nation has had the enterprise to imitate even in these days of iron roads.

This marvellous spectacle of the thriving power of a small community was destined to have an end. Muhammad's standard was planted over the dome of St. Sophia in 1453, and the intercourse of the Crimea with the Mediterranean was broken off. The destruction of the Genoese settlements was then inevitable; and the republic, despairing of their preservation, assigned them over to the bank of St. George on the 15th of November, 1453. The consequences may be readily foreseen. Caffa was forced to surrender at discretion to the Turks on the 6th of June, 1473, and, one by one, all the points occupied by the Genoese fell into the hands of the Turks.

Under the reign of the first Khans, who were tributary to the Porte, the Crimea lost all its commercial and agricultural importance. Continual wars and incessant revolts, sometimes favoured, sometimes punished by the Porte, added to the still deeply-rooted habits of a nomade and a vagabond existence, for many years precluded the regeneration of the country. But a rich, fertile soil, and a country abundantly provided with all the resources necessary to man, triumphed over the natural indolence of the Tartars, just as they had done before by the savage hordes that successively invaded the Crimea. The hill-sides and valleys became covered with villages, and all branches of native industry increased rapidly with the internal tranquillity of the country. The corn, cattle, timber, resins, fish, and salt of the Crimea furnished freights for a multitude of vessels. The commerce of Central Asia, it is true, was lost for it beyond recovery, but the exportation of its native produce, and of that which Russia sent to it by the Don and the Sea of Azof, was more than sufficient to keep its people in a thriving, if not in an opulent condition. Caffa shared in the general improvement; it rose again from its ruins, became the commercial centre of the country, as in the time of the Genoese, and its advancement was such, that the Turks bestowed on it the flattering epithet of Kutchuk Stambul (Little Constantinople).

The dominion of the Khans extended at this period from the banks of the Danube to the foot of the mountains of Caucasus, and the indomitable mountaineers themselves often did homage to the sovereigns of the Crimea. The Tartar population was divided in those days into two great classes: the descendants of the first conquerors and the Nogays, nomade tribes who came, subsequently, and put themselves under the protection of the celebrated Batu Khan. The former, mixed up with the remains of the ancient possessors, formed the civilised part of the nation. Possessing the mountainous regions, and residing in towns and villages, they were both agriculturists and manufacturers; whilst the Nogays, who lived in a manner independently in Southern Russia, applied themselves solely to cattle-rearing. Such was the political condition of the Crimea and its dependencies when the Russian conquest of the provinces of the Sea of Azof and the Black Sea destroyed all the fruits of the great social revo-

lution which had been effected in the habits of the Tartars by the new development of trade and commerce.

The first Muscovite invasion took place in 1736. A hundred thousand men, commanded by Field-Marshal Munich, forced the Isthmus of Perecop, entered the peninsula, and laid waste the whole country up to the northern slope of the Tauric chain. The peace of Belgrade put an end to this first inroad, but the political existence of the Crimea was, nevertheless, violently shaken; and from that time forth the Khans were kept in perpetual perplexity by the secret or armed interventions of Russia, their subjects were stimulated to revolt, and they themselves were but puppets moved by the court of St. Petersburg.

In 1783 Sahim Kuarai abdicated in favour of the Empress Catherine II., and the kingdom of the Tartars finally ceased to exist; and with it perished the last elements of the prosperity of a land that had been so often ravaged, and had always emerged victoriously from its disasters. Previously to this period, in 1778, the irresistible command of Russia had determined the emigration of all the Greek and Armenian families of the Crimea; and an agricultural and trading population had been seen to quit voluntarily, as Russia pretends, fertile regions and a favouring climate to settle in the wild steppes of the Don and the Sea of Azof.

About the same period, and under the same influence, began the emigration of the Tartars and Nogays, some of whom retired into Bessarabia, the Danubian Principalities, and the Dobrudscha; others to the Caucasus. The heaviest calamities fell, of course, on the peninsula, which was covered with fixed settlements, and there the scenes of carnage and devastation which had marked the irruption of the barbarians from Asia were renewed in all their horrors. The Crimea lost at least nine-tenths of its population; its towns were given up to pillage, its fields laid waste; and in the space of a few months that region, which had been still so flourishing under its last Khan, exhibited but one vast spectacle of oppression, misery, and devastation.

Since that period there have elapsed seventy years, during which the Russian domination has never had any resistance to encounter or revolt to quell; and yet, notwithstanding the opening of the Dardanelles, the Crimea has been unable, to this day, to rise from the deep depression into which it was sunk by the political events of the close of the eighteenth century. It is true, no doubt, that a formidable fortress has arisen at the site of the ancient Khersonesus, that very handsome villas have been erected on the southern coast, and that luxurious opulence has made that region its chosen seat; but the vital and productive forces of the peninsula have been smothered, its trade and agriculture have been destroyed; and that sullen quietude in which the dwindled population of the Tartars now vegetates, results at once from the destruction of all material resources, and the extinction of all moral and intellectual energy which have come to pass under the sway of the Russian despotism.

It is only by a glance like this at the past, as compared with the present, that a correct idea of the political and commercial importance of the Crimea can be obtained; much more might be said as to its present condition under Russian maladministration—but enough for the moment. It remains to be seen whether the political and commercial regeneration of this most favoured region may not become a matter for serious consideration in the present conjuncture of affairs.

A VILLAGE TALE.

BY GUSTAV NIERITZ.

XI.

THE PREVENTED SUICIDE.

ADOLPH'S recovery, as well as that of Elise, made rapid progress. Halm was already preparing to return to his work in the tin mine, when the remembrance of his daughter's conversation with Wiesam recurred to him.

"What was it, my child," he asked, "that you were saying to Wiesam, whom you called Fahner?"

Friederike blushed and seemed confused. She then looked inquiringly at her mother.

"Tell your father the secret," Madame Halm advised her. "He will be able to calm himself, and perhaps be comforted, when he learns the real cause of his unmerited repulse."

Friederike then confessed what the reader already knows, and what she had till now kept concealed from her father, from a good feeling. During the last two days, she added, the pretended Wiesam had discovered her presence in Zinnberg, and sought an opportunity to talk with her again. She had reproached him with her father's misfortunes and the insult he received from the examiner, but he had denied any knowledge of it. Friederike had not, till then, imagined that Wiesam and Fahner were one and the same person, and had only discovered it through her last interview with him. Halm became very thoughtful after this avowal.

"It is impossible for me to credit," he said afterwards, "that Wiesam's passion for you was the sole ground of my repulse. If this were true, it would be more than bad for all persons who present themselves for examination. Just as easily might any trifling illness which affected the examiner—for instance, toothache, indigestion, headache—every domestic quarrel, lead to the same result. No, no! I recognise my defects; still they should not have been laid before me in that way. But," he broke out in righteous wrath, "that this miserable fellow, this undutiful son, would dare to rob me of my dearest possession, that I cannot allow to pass. While I was exerting myself to lead him back to the paths of virtue, he tries behind my back to seduce my innocent dearly-loved child, and destroy her eternally! Why did I not punish him in such a way that he could never enter my house again?"

"Stop, Gotthelf!" Madame Halm said. "Think that it was through Wiesam's advice that our Adolph was saved from deadly peril."

"Does that justify him in destroying my other child?" Halm asked, bitterly.

"Friederike will not suffer herself to be corrupted," Madame Halm replied, "least of all by such a wheyface as this Wiesam."

"Constant dropping wears away a stone," Halm said, "and continued flattery will eventually deceive even a virtuous mind. Of this we have a striking proof in the miller's daughter, who, in her despair, has murdered

herself. The girl was my obedient pupil, and formerly behaved most prudently. I should then really yield to my troubles, if one of my children suffered the same fate."

"That shall never be, father," Friederike assured him, and confirmed this promise by a tender kiss.

Halm afterwards went to the shaft; but when he returned in the evening after finishing his labours, he avoided any intercourse with Wiesam, or, more properly, with Fahner. He preferred to make a little circuit, which led him past a pond from which the steam-works of the mine received their water. It lay in a little valley, above which the autumn wind howled and roared cheerlessly. At times a blast of wind found its way into the valley, and shook the leafless alder shrubs by the pond, so that their summits bowed toward one another with a hoarse rustling or gentle whisper. A solitary partridge uttered its melancholy cry in measured cadence, and the water that ran off passed with a hollow sound through the subterranean canal. The moon poured its pale light on the peaceful earth below, through an atmosphere impregnated with damp mists.

Halm had little attention for the external world. His mind was too much occupied with self. It was not until his foot almost touched a female form, which sat, or rather kneeled, in a confused mass near the pond, that he came to himself. Following the silent movements of the form with watchful eyes, he fancied he saw it contorted by violent pain.

"Here's luck!" he said, in a gentle voice; "is anything the matter with you?"

The figure, whose head, neck, and chest were wrapped in a thick shawl, did not reply, as it seemed, through excess of pain. Halm waited patiently and silently. These words were at length heard from the lips of the figure: "Kill me—or throw me—into the pond—and I will—bless you for it."

"That is an unchristian wish," Halm replied, "which I dare not fulfil. What drives you to it?"

The woman silently shook her head. "If you cannot help me, then," she said, after a pause, "go—go!"

"I dare not do so," Halm answered firmly. "You wish to commit murder, and that I cannot suffer. I am a poor miner, have toiled for eight hours in the earth, am tired and hungry, and would gladly be at home in the warm room with my wife and children—but you force me to stop here till some one comes and helps me to remove you from here to some place of safety."

"Then I must go," the woman said, bitterly, and rose with difficulty to her feet.

Halm now perceived in the moonlight that the woman had already made an attempt to drown herself in the pond, for her dress was dripping with water. At the same time, he also guessed the cause of her attempted suicide from her figure.

Seizing her by the shoulders with both hands, he said, severely,

"What, wretched woman! you could commit a double murder? and kill with yourself an innocent being which would immediately denounce its unnatural mother before the throne of the Almighty? If the earth

has such miseries that you wish to quit it, know that the pangs of hell are far more terrible and will endure to eternity!"

The woman had fallen again on her knees.

"My seducer," she hoarsely complained, "has deserted me and my child. My father rejected me—the world covered me with shame—what should I do longer on this earth?"

"Live for your child," Halm replied, sternly; "bear the punishment of your sin with submission. If the whole world—father, mother, lover, and friend—have deserted you, a gracious God still lives, who does not punish us according to our iniquities, but wishes that all men may be helped in their time of trouble. Do you not know the Lamb of God that bears the sins of the world?"

"That too!" the unhappy woman groaned in heartrending tones. She then threw herself on her knees before Halm, and embracing his knees with both her arms, she sobbed out: "Don't you recognise me, sir? Ah! you were my faithful teacher—you warned me so affectionately—guarded me ever from vice and temptation, and now you must find me in this wretched condition."

Halm bent down in surprise, and looked into a pale face that was woefully changed by grief, pain, and bitter want, from which the veiling cloth had fallen.

"Great Heavens!" he cried, "is it possible? Can you be the miller's daughter—the blooming, cheerful, playful, though virtuous Catharine?"

"I was that," the unhappy woman shrieked out, "and now I am a dishonoured outcast. Kill me, sir—throw me into the pond!"

Halm took the despairing girl by the arm. "Come, my dear and still beloved child!" he said, soothingly; "He, who knew no sin, could not condemn the adulteress, and shall I, a poor sinful being, show no mercy?"

With the powerful support of Halm's arm, Catharine tottered towards the town. The somewhat precipitous path became a Jacob's ladder to him, and in silent joy the ex-schoolmaster's warm heart beat, who was conducting such an unexpected guest to his family. The miller's daughter, who almost sunk beneath her renewed sufferings, was laid on the schoolmistress's bed, and Halm, forgetting his fatigue and hunger, prepared to fetch the doctor. Beforehand, however, he drew his honest wife to his breast.

"Dearest Tinel," he said, with joyful emotion, "if our Lord smites us at times, he knows how to cure again like no human physician can. Not a quarter of an hour back, I had my head full of that beautiful Wiesam, and now all my fears are scattered like chaff before the wind. Wife! look here! I have again got on the jacket with the hole in the sleeve. It seems as if it brought me nothing but good luck. Man requires merely an external impulse to good or to bad. Such in my case is the poor patch of cloth in my jacket. If the exercise of a Christian duty appear to me difficult, or I am about to commit a sin, a glance at that patch and a thought on its cause immediately give me strength, which I certainly greatly required when the examiner sat on my shoulders, and when I found myself lately alone in the mine with his son who tried to ruin my daughter, and whom I could have killed without exciting any suspicion."

While the women were engaged in the bedroom, either in assisting or consoling the miller's daughter, Halm laid himself down to rest in the sitting-room, where the two sick children also lay. Halm slept as if reclining on eider-down, or even more luxuriously. For his soft pillow was a calm, or even joyful, conscience which, during his dreams, opened Heaven's gates to him. When he awoke the next morning with fresh strength and spirits, his beloved Tinel came to his bed-side. She held a new-born and healthy child out to him, which lay on a poor pillow.

"He shall be called Gotthelf, like you," the good woman said, with tears of joy in her honest eyes.

"A boy, then?" Halm asked, with a smile, and rose up. "Give me the child of sorrow," he then asked. He touched the babe's head gently with his hand. "Become a good man," he said, with emotion, "and your mother's joy."

"Only see!" Madame Halm complained; "the rich miller's grandson and these rags! No caps or laces, no proper wrappers, and Friederike's pillow for a bed!"

"The Son of the Most High lay in a manger," Halm comforted her, "and the poor and lowly will be exalted."

"We are poor and lowly," Madame Halm said, "but——"

Her speech was interrupted by the children, who also begged to see baby. The mother yielded to their wishes.

"And what does the child's mother say?" Halm asked. "Does she now wish to put an end to her life?"

"She is entirely changed," Madame Halm answered. "She says that God has helped her, and for that reason and in honour of you the child shall be christened Gotthelf."

"Before anything else," Halm said, "I must write to the miller and inform him of the recovery of his daughter, whom he fancied dead. May his heart be softened so that he may again recognise and receive the unhappy girl!"

Halm did so. After he had put his letter into the post, he went to the mine.

XII.

THE SHADOW OF DEATH AND THE PENITENT.

FAHNER, the examiner's son, was working by Halm's side, beneath the light of the dimly-burning lamp. From time to time the earth trembled from the thunder of the explosions, though they took place at a considerable distance.

"Were I to grow accustomed to everything else here," Fahner said, after one of these explosions, "I could never bear this uncomfortable sound. It seems as if the earth were falling in upon us."

"And yet there are men," Halm replied, glad of an opportunity to lighten his heart towards his fellow-workman, "who then must wish and exclaim, 'Ye hills cover us—ye mountains fall upon us!'"

"That would be my very last wish," Fahner said, incredulously.

"That I believe myself," Halm answered, seriously; "and this is the unfortunate thing, that such a wish is the last, and yet too late."

"It is an allegorical expression, and nothing more," Fahner said.

"Thus mortals speak in their security," Halm went on to say; "but the more will they tremble when the allegory is changed into a terrible truth. You fancy yourself secure, too, Wiesam or Fahner, but when the trumpets of the last day thunder in your ears and arouse you, you will also tremble. Then a father with his numerous family will appear before the throne of the Eternal, and accuse you of depriving him of his situation, bread, and honour. Then, too, will come a poor man, whose only lamb you took from him, which drank from his cup and lay in his bosom. That father and poor man am I, and the lamb is my beloved child, my Friederike, my pride and my joy! This lamb you would not kill and set it before your guests—no, poison it, slowly, torturingly, irremediably! What did I to you, wretched man, that you would inflict such injury upon me? Oh! my heart bleeds in agony when I think that my child could become as unhappy as the poor being whom I met last night at the pond, and had great difficulty in saving from suicide. She was once my pupil, and yet I did not recognise her, so terribly had grief and despair altered her once blooming face. Poor miller Kühn! How rich am I compared to thee!"

Here the pick fell from Wiesam's hands, and a corpse-like pallor covered his face.

"Would you have acted differently," Halm continued, without noticing his companion's surprise, "than that wretched tempter, who, after he plucked the flower, went away with a demon laugh, and exposed the wretched girl and her innocent child to destruction? Hark! another explosion! Why do you tremble, when only a few ounces of gunpowder are fired? But then—then howl, and tear your hair, and beat your breast, when the stars fall from the heavens and are scattered into fragments like——"

The preacher's chastising lips were here suddenly closed. The earth, under, above, and around him, groaned, heaved, and fell in. All light disappeared, and the lamp went out. Their ears were almost burst by the horrible noise, which far surpassed any human or superhuman artillery. A whirlwind rushed upwards from the depths below, and threw the two men down with immense force, and they lay there like reeds levelled by the storm-wind. A yelling cry of agony resounded through all the passages and shafts of the mine, and with the fall of the masses of earth and stone was mingled the noise of the steam-engine that hurried down to the abyss below. Soon after, however, the silence of the grave assumed the place of the late overpowering disturbance.

Halm could not say how long his state of unconsciousness lasted. When he awoke, night surrounded him. He feared that the whole weight of the mountain must lie upon him, and that he lay a living object in a stony coffin, whose cover was several hundred yards thick, and could not be removed. But the hand he stretched out feelingly struck no hard object, and when Halm arose from the ground he was able to stand upright in the passage as before. He was then seized with an irresistible human longing for liberty—for release. Spite of the darkness he ran

along the passage and towards the entrance. He paid no attention to the masses of stone and earth over which his hurried feet stumbled. But, alas! he had scarce mounted two or three steps, when his head struck a mass of granite, which filled the whole of the shaft above him, and would not yield. He sank back annihilated! walled up in the deepest bowels of the earth! What mortal would not be oppressed by such a thought? And as if to mock the poor man, his fancy began to paint the most pleasing features of the past before his mental eye. Above him, instead of the dark shaft, a blue sky was arched, the golden sun poured forth his beams, and the rejoicing lark rose towards Heaven's gates. He saw himself by the side of his dear wife and children, walking beneath the leafy cover of blossoming fruit-trees, which rained upon them a shower of bloom, and concealed chirruping birds within their branches. Again he saw himself walking through the street of his dear village, and young and old nodding to him affectionately. Then he entered God's house in his holiday dress, where the sounds of the organ pealed solemnly beneath his hands, through the lofty space. All eyes were fixed upon his lips, when he stood at the desk and read the Sunday lessons. He also mounted to the belfry where the brazen joy and sorrow announcers hung, which his hand set in motion, to summon the villagers to vespers. Next he looked down through the tower window upon the verdant, richly favoured landscape, over which the evening sun poured its magic light. He looked towards his schoolhouse, to the fragrant, happy jasmine arbour, in which his Tinel was preparing the supper-table, and placing on the white glistening cloth hard eggs, golden butter, and nourishing break, as well as the canaster-filled evening pipe. And all Halm's children were collected round the well-covered board, and looking expectantly towards the steeple, and waving their handkerchiefs to their father, that he might come and commence the meal. He, however, smote his breast when the charming picture suddenly disappeared and yielded to the terrible reality, and tore his hair and shrieked for help and release. But only the echo returned his despairing cries.

"Heavenly Father! hast thou then utterly deserted me?" Halm entreated.

A voice then said, earnestly and warningly: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."* Then the peal of an organ sounded in Halm's ears, and he heard his former parishioners singing the hymn, "Jesus lives and I with him! Death, where are now thy terrors?"

And Halm's heart joined in the hymn, and his tears flowed abundantly, though less painfully. And he bent his knee and his head before Him who is not far from any of us, and prayed for His assistance. After this, day dawned before Halm's mental eye, so that he was able to examine more clearly what he had to do. He looked for his tinder-box, which he always carried with him. He then searched about for the spot where he had left his lamp. In doing so, he stumbled over an object, which he found on examination was a human being.

* Ps. 23, v. 4.

"Shame on you, Halm," his conscience smote him, "that through your own troubles you could utterly forget your comrade in misfortune."

Halm soon found the lamp, and lighted it. His first business afterwards was to restore Fahner, who was still unconscious, to his senses. His awakening was by far more terrible than Halm's, and the latter was forced to exert himself to the utmost to restrain his comrade from carrying out a desperate design. He tore from him the pocket-knife, with which he intended to open his veins, after clearly comprehending their terrible position, and threw it far from him.

"Apply yourself to God," Halm said, "as our wisdom is at an end. Pray like Daniel, when he sat among the hungry lions: like Paul in prison, or those three men in the fiery furnace."

"Pray?" Fahner said, with pallid lips and distorted features. "I pray? I cannot pray—I have forgotten—no, I cannot pray—but curse—yes, curse!"

Fahner spoke the last words with wild desperation, but his whole body trembled at the same time.

"You are right when you say you cannot pray," Halm answered sternly. "In this you resemble the devils, who are forced to believe in the existence of a just God, but tremble at this belief! You tremble too, for you were a devil to your own father, the destroyer of my quiet happiness, and a demon to my Friederike, whom you wished to bear with you to hell. Now you desire that the hills had fallen on you and crushed you, when you lay here in an unconscious state? But your awakening in another world would have been all the more terrible. Take courage, man! Listen! I will yield my Friederike in her virgin charms to your pleasure, and fulfil everything you may request of me. Cannot this promise delight you? Poor fool! If you possessed all the treasures of the world, you would be forced to despair. Invoke your much-lauded reason to find you a method of release: summon to your recollection all the sophistries of witty and clever philosophers, that the thought of the approaching, condemning eternity may vanish like a puff of smoke. Why do you not jest now at the pretended nursery tales about another world, with which, according to your idea, only superstitious people are terrified? Ah! all, all becomes here a mere bubble, which is burst by the slightest breath of wind and leaves no trace behind. One thing remains to us—Faith! It was Faith which formerly bore me up in my despair: Faith, which now alleviates the pang of quitting this earth to which, alas! such strong ties bind me: Faith, which lets me see Heaven's gates open to receive me. 'Death, where is thy sting?' I ask, firmly. 'Grave, where is thy victory?'"

Halm now ceased: but his eyes were fixed on his companion, who sat before him a picture of unutterable misery and despair.

It was an agonising spectacle to see the two miners, like two statues, in their deep grave, which was only dimly lighted by the gleam of the lamp, sitting silently opposite each other. No sound was to be heard save that of the dripping waters, which united into small streams and hurried towards the depths. After a while though, they increased in size and noise, and their fall into the unknown depth more and more re-

sembled a waterfall. The attentive ear plainly heard that the falling water joined some other pools that were collected there previously, and the calculating mind recognised with terror that the hole could not be very deep, and had no channel of escape; and that, consequently, the water would soon fill it, and at length encompass the two men that were buried alive.

Only Halm heard and considered this; for Fahner was still half unconscious.

"Do you hear, comrade in death," Halm whispered, as if wishing to conceal from the water the presence of human beings, "how sand after sand in our hour-glass runs away and swells into a mound? Soon, perhaps even in a few hours, our time will have come! Matters will not come so far, that we shall forget our attributes as men, through the pangs of hunger, and tear one another's flesh. Nor will our throats be parched by the want of water. But it will swell to a stream, become a deluge, which will suffocate us after futile resistance. Will you delay your repentance till the wings of death encompass you?—till your eyes are closed, and your heart no longer beats?"

Fahner made no reply to all Halm's remarks. The light in the latter's lamp flickered and suddenly expired through lack of oil.

"You have the tinder-box," Fahner now cried, recovering his voice all at once. "Here, take my lamp and light it."

"No!" Halm replied, firmly. "For what purpose? Let us save the little oil until I have to fetch water for our refreshment, or—we feel our hour of death approaching. Hardened sinner! you are now driven into outer darkness. I hear your teeth chattering from fear, and I shall soon hear you howling through despair. Think, oh man! what a gulf there is between you and Heaven! But there is still time for you to be released from your punishment. But hasten, before your last hour approaches. Cannot this place of terror penetrate the hard covering of your heart?"

And it broke! and in the same proportion as his heart had before been daring, it was now humbled. Fahner began to weep bitterly. He sobbed terribly; and then cried, "Yes—I was a wicked man—an ungrateful son! It was I, too, who seduced the miller's daughter, and then deserted her——"

"This crime, too!" Halm complained; "woe! woe! woe!"

"But," Fahner continued, "my father bears the greatest share of blame. At first he let me do as I pleased, but then tried to check me by harsh, unmerciful treatment. I should not have quitted Catharine, had I not seen with certainty that my father would never have consented to this union."

"Blinded youth," Halm said sternly, "do you think that is real penance when you try to remove the guilt from your own shoulders to those of another person? You ought to confess and bitterly repent your sins, and then determine in your heart never to commit them again."

"I will do so," Fahner said earnestly. "Oh! if I could once again see the light of day, what a different man I would become! my life should henceforth be only devoted to virtue. Catharine should become my wife—her child mine; and I would turn farmer, and procure bread for myself and my family by the sweat of my brow!"

"That you promise now, when you stand before the gates of eternity and judgment," Halm replied; "but how would it be, if the sunshine again smiled on you—if the world again surrounded you with its countless pleasures—if the sarcasms of the worldly-wise again assailed you?"

"I would remain firm," Fahner assured him, "and faithful to my vow."

"You may deceive me," Halm said, impressively, "but not Him who tries the heart and loins, and understands our thoughts from afar. Is your penance sincere, God will be merciful to you. But close your reckoning with Him now, for, believe me, you can now pray."

Halm lighted the lamp, took the empty can, and walked towards the entrance of the passage, not to disturb the penitent sinner's prayer. He only descended ten steps before his foot entered the water. He drew a can full, and then calculated the time before the water would fill the slight space and menace their lives. He had begun to grow despondent when the calculation only yielded a short interval. But Judith's words suddenly occurred to him, "Would you assign time and space in which God shall help you?" He then sought another and external remedy which should support the mental one. With this purpose he pulled up his left sleeve, and regarding the patch, he said to himself, "Would God have only saved you from such great danger merely to expose you hereafter to so terrible a death? Lord, in thee I put my trust; thou wilt release me!"

The two companions in sorrow pressed close together. They lamented, prayed, and wept; they feared and hoped in turn. The hours passed away, but not so the waters, which poured down with increasing rapidity, and soon threatened to overflow. The lamp had gone out, and the atmosphere in the narrow space of the shaft seemed to grow heavier and more oppressive. Halm's and Fahner's eyelids fell, heavy as lead, on their darkened eyes. A confused state of waking and dreaming overpowered them, which made them understand and feel their terrible position less clearly. While the waters ceased to roar on the left hand of the prisoners, for it had no depth to fall, the mountain on the right began heaving again. Whether the down-thundering masses were moved by human hands, or by another slip of earth, the now indistinctly hearing ears of the two men could not distinguish. They became more dull towards the external world, and their senses were all confined to one craving desire for rest, sleep, and unconsciousness. In this condition it made no impression on Halm when his foot entered the water. Exerting his dying strength and consciousness, he embraced Fahner with his right hand, and pressed his head against his shoulder. Thus the two prisoners fell asleep in their deep grave, waiting to hear the voice of Him who will, one day, rouse all the dead from their graves!

DUBLIN STREET-CRIES.

BY MATTHEW LYNCH.

DUBLIN has been described as the most "car-drivingest" place in the world;—as well might it be denominated the most street-crying city in it. The Dublin cries will teach much to their attentive hearers. There is a philosophy in these which is worthy of being learned. Our metropolitan cries are peculiar, and the manner in which the criers give these utterance is as various as the whims of the Irish people are found. They will teach to travellers in Dublin how difficult it is accurately to learn the idiosyncrasies of the Irish character. Sometimes the criers elongate the usual pronunciation of those terms by which they announce their wares for sale, and at other periods they contract these. But length of pronunciation seems to be their hobby as well as brogue—loudness of utterance in their crying. They announce a quart of their wares, selling them, by measure, as by pints. A determined Dublin crier in offering for sale a case containing six needles, exhibited his relish for lengthened enunciation of cry by thus announcing it for sale: "A needle, and a needle, and a needle, and a needle, and a needle, and a needle, and a needle-case —all for a penny!" Another peculiarity in their crying consists in their joining other criers crying the same article, in order to swell the volume of the sound of the voices uttering the announcement of its sale in the cried street, and consequently draw the attention of the most aurably obtuse denizens of such locality to the article vending at their hands. The wish to shorten the pronunciation of their cries is perceived in a crier of herrings, announcing herring for sale; though very many of the herring-criers of our city elongate the word herrings in proclaiming these useful fish for sale. In some parts of Ireland they are adepts in long and short pronunciation of their words; as in Tipperary, a Tipperary man is enabled to pronounce the name of his county as if composed but of one syllable. And Lord Norbury, a *punny*, though not a puisne, judge of Ireland, a native of Tipperary, was enabled to pronounce T as if consisting but of a single syllable, the phrase Tipperary-mutton. A native of Tipperary, who has not studied English prosody, will, at a dinner-table, request a servant supplying him with a clane pleet (clean plate); thus, in one phrase, showing his countrymen's relish for long and short pronunciation of their words. Truth's deviation seems, as practised by our Dublin criers, in those instances wherein it is most easily detected by the hearers of the cries; as in crying herrings for sale, they will style them as living—"Herrings alive, alive!" Now it is a well-known fact, arising from the formation of the herring's gills, that a herring survives removal from the sea to land a very short period of time. Bishop Whately has alluded to an "uninquiring credulity" being practised by persons in this country; and these herring-criers, who at present announce their selling live herrings, would seem as practising it, as the announcement of live herrings, by herring-vendors, for sale in our metropolis was frequently heard by our Dublin citizens in the lifetime of Dean Swift. It would be a difficult task to enumerate the numerous cries of Dublin; but sufficient

notice will now be taken of them as to explain them satisfactorily to every reader of these pages. A stranger in our city will be surprised to hear a stentorian-voiced son of Hibernia announcing "Twenty-four sods a penny;" and he may, if sitting in Dublin lodgings, in hearing this, to him, startling announcement, imagine his announcing the sale of sods of grass for putting in larks' cages, in order to delude incarcerated larks into the idea of their being in a state of freedom, taking these sods of grass for the fields in which so high over they were wont to soar. Soon his ignorance on this subject will be dispelled, on his inquiry as to the nature of his cry from his attendant, the communicative Irish servant-maid informing him of his announcing thus the selling of sods of turf, which have been brought to Dublin from an Irish bog; and by way of supplemental information, could inform him of the fact of many *strong* (rich) men of olden times, possessed of broad acres, who then owned *not* as much of landed property as "would sod a lark." In various forms, by the criers, who roll it about in hand-machines, or expose it for sale in large carts drawn by horses, is its sale announced as "Black turf, black turf," by the number of the sods vouchsafed to a purchaser for one penny, &c. Turf, in Dublin, is generally used by our citizens for keeping alive and lighting fires. It is black and brown in colour, and hand and spade made. The Dublin people find it, as fuel, more expensive than coals would be, at the prices charged for it by perambulatory turf-merchants. In bedrooms it forms an agreeable fire, and advantageously remains long lighting; and to many its smell is agreeable; still classical scholars might be adverse to its use, fearful of its spoiling their Latinity. He will also be surprised at hearing, particularly in the less frequented streets of our metropolis, the constant announcements of "Cockles, cockles!" "Fresh cockles, cockles alive!" "Cockles alive, alive!" "Fresh cockles!" and "Fresh cockles, live cockles!" and in consequence of such hearing will be impressed with the idea of the Dublin people being greatly addicted to the eating of cockles. There seems to be amusement attached to the eating of cockles by our citizens, and a cockle re-union of a few of a household is attended with mirthfulness, from which the governor, the great spoil-sport of youthful, jovial parties, or considered such by their youthful members, is always excluded, and the gay servant-maid is sure being present at it, as its laughter exciter; this fact would *satisfactorily* account for the origin of the phrase, "to raise the cockles of your heart"—as meaning to give mirthfulness to the heart. The poorest class of persons engage in this cockle-selling business, disposing of their shell-fish at the moderate charge of a penny a quart. It requires no capital in the vendor of this fish to set up in this line of business; all he requires in setting up in this business is, a knife to root up the cockles with, a basket to contain them on being rooted up, and a string to suspend it from his neck; the cockles will be gathered by him off the Irishtown coast, beyond the suburban village of Ringsend, smelling of crabs and cockles. Every one walking the sands along the shore would not perceive the resting-place of the cockle; it is apparent by a small aperture appearing in the sand. The cockles, as the tide recedes from the shore, are rooted out of their resting-places in the sand by dilapidated old knives by these adventurous captains of precarious existence. Poor fellows! hardly is their bread earned; they are cadaverous-

looking, raw-boned creatures, to whom misery seems as having been long a household word. Pity the fatigue and industry put forward by them in their shell-fish occupation should not be better rewarded than they are! But they have never been taught better than the cockle trade; still it is better than that of theft. Yet a gaol would afford them better protection than doth their occupation supply to them.

Another cry would astound the stranger in Dublin, that of "Heath-brooms!" pronounced by their vendors as "Haith-brooms!" This cry is uttered from the mouths of sturdy mountaineers from the neighbouring hills of the county Dublin, who never knew what it was being nervous, or ever tasted physic since they were tortured by it in infancy. Surely selling brooms at 1d. each, as they do, cannot be adequate remuneration for their toil and trouble in carrying on this occupation; still, as the scarcest commodities of the mountains are tobacco and money, and as the former in our city cannot be procured without the possession of the latter, these poor fellows are obliged to convert the heath in brooms into money, in order to allow of their indulging in the luxury of smoking. The cries of "Turnip, turnip!" "Fine turnip, fine turnip, turnip, turnip!" and "Fine turnip, fine turnip, turnip!" will quickly vibrate upon the ears of the sojourners of our dwellings in Dublin, and bring to their minds visions of legs of mutton and caper-sauce. In the mind of a citizen of Dublin or London turnips are always associated with the idea of a boiled leg of mutton. Charles Lamb, in travelling in England in a stage-coach, ere railroads were traversed by excursionists, in company with a farmer, was told by his agricultural companion the cheering to him agricultural prognostication, that turnips would be plenty that season, when facetious city-liking Charles Lamb, to his astonishment, exclaimed: "Then legs of mutton will be plenty." The Dublin people use turnips with even roast meat—particularly in a mashed form. With a breast of boiled mutton young turnips eat very toothsomely; still, young turnips, joined to the boiled leg of mutton, and accompanied with parsley and butter, form a surpassing dish, and one of great relish to an Irish palate. A boiled leg of mutton has ever been a favourite dish with Irishmen; and this preference on their part for the boiled leg of mutton is to a great extent due to the accompaniment to it of turnips; in fact, an Irishman would forego his potatoes sooner than his turnips with a boiled leg of mutton. The great prandial value attached to the dish of boiled leg of mutton and turnips by the Irish people from these words of an eloquent rural Irish priest, addressed to his congregation, appear: "The pains of Hell were but cock-fighting to the Battle of Bunker's Hill, and a leg of mutton and turnips were nothing to the joys of Heaven!"

The cries "Cabbage, cabbage!" and "Fresh cabbage, fresh cabbage!" are heard uttered by women carrying cabbages contained in baskets suspended from their arms, or sieves supported by their heads, or by men hawking them along our metropolitan streets in carts. Cabbage is scarcely ever eaten by Irishmen, except with bacon and corned meat—particularly corned beef. A corned rump of beef and cabbage is a favourite dish with all persons in Ireland—either peers or peasants. Corned beef is styled beef by the Irish people; and beef and cabbage are looked upon as forming a splendid dish by our people. A repeal orator, at a meeting in a rural part of Ireland, held for the purpose of

aiding towards the destruction of the Act of Union, proclaimed to his simple audience that, on the repeal of the Union, they would be enabled to eat beef and cabbage; and a rough cross-examining Irish barrister, at an assizes, ironically asked a witness in court, in cross-examination of him, "Did he like cabbage and beef?" Bacon and cabbage are much relished as a dish by our poorer classes of Irishmen; and bacon is almost the only species of meat touched by them throughout the year. This dish with the comfortable classes in Ireland forms an adjunct to boiled chickens, barn-door fowls, turkeys, rabbits, and veal.

Most species of vegetables are cried about the Dublin streets by hawkers of them, and by these cried will be heard as thus announced: "Peas, green peas" (the word "peas" pronounced by these persons as if spelled "pays"), "New peas, new peas;" "Fine cauliflower;" "Beans, green beans" ("beans" pronounced as if written "bains"), &c. Our supply of vegetables in Dublin is good and copious; sometimes their prices are much enhanced to our citizens by a large quantity of them leaving this port to supply the vegetable market in Scotland and England.

The Dublin people are partial to tripes as a dinner dish, and these are cried about our streets by dealers in tripes in a short announcement, who dispose of them by weight to our citizens. The public diners-out of Dublin are, in winter months, partial to partaking of the dish denominated tripe and cow-heel, which, at moderate prices, well dressed, is supplied to them in various taverns of Dublin, on exclusive days in each week of the tripe and cow-heel season.

Fish of various kinds are daily announced, in Dublin, in well-brogued, articulated announcements from the throats of determined-minded and strong-tongued women. Men scarcely ever indulge in our city in any species of the fish-hawking business, except that of cockle and oyster selling. Our Dublin fishwomen are sturdy females, who purchase each week-day their fish at a very early hour in the morning, at a public auction of fish, amidst noise and joviality. The auctioneers of these fish-sales are composed both of men and women. By railway and carts fish is conveyed for sale to Dublin, to the place wherein this fish auction is held. In markets, and shops, and by hawkers in Dublin, fish is disposed of. The respectable citizens of Dublin purchase any fish they may require at the fishmongers' shops, wherein the primest description can be obtained. The Dublin fishmongers are not solely reliable on their purchases of fish at the public fish auctions for carrying on their trade, but have supplies of fish transmitted to them from the inland and sea-coast fisheries of Ireland. It is wonderful the high prices fish realise in Dublin, particularly salmon, notwithstanding the great fishing capabilities of the country, and ease of bringing fish to Dublin, by railways and other modes of transit; but this surprising fact may, at least in regard to salmon, be accounted for through the vast quantities of this fish daily sent from Ireland, for consumption, to England. Still our fisheries are in their infancy.

The salmon fisheries of our rivers are well cared, and are profitable to their owners. Salmon is higher in price than meat is in our markets, though high-priced the latter at present is—a fact proving the great value of a salmon fishery. The practice of wisping salmon along the Irish rivers by poachers by night, is a great means of salmon destruction

in this country. In pursuing this practice, the peasantry, by night, proceed along the streams with lighted fir branches, which, from the resinous nature of fir, burn long and bright; and these illuminate the streams so as to make the salmon apparent to their view; and then, by use of gaffs, they spear the salmon, and with nets, or without them, bring them to the banks. Though this practice is contrary to law, parties are fearful in preventing the peasantry of Ireland procuring what they deem as public property the fish of their native country's rivers.

Sir Jonah Barrington tells a ludicrous story of a mower, with a scythe in his hand, walking with a companion along an Irish stream, seeing a fine salmon floating in the river, exclaiming to his companion his wish of having a gaff to spear the salmon with; when the other immediately proclaimed to him of his having one at the end of the handle of the scythe; when he immediately assented to his assertion, and made use of the scythe-handle as a spear, forgetful of the dread sword at the end remote from the spike, which answered as a gaff, cutting off his own head and one of his companion's ears. This mower's head, together with the ear of his companion, floated together down the river in which the salmon was gaffed, and into a mill-race leading from it, whereon a person, seeing these floating, exclaimed to his companions as to a head floating in the water; when one of them, with an irreverent exclamation, assented to his assertion, with the qualification of the head having three ears.

The most famous place for the sale of fish in Dublin is Pill-lane—market and street. The Irish fishwomen are herein seen in all their glory. Pill-lane is the Billingsgate of Dublin. A large collection of good fish is daily offered for sale in this market; and a large quantity of a cheap description of fish is daily presented at stands in the street, for the poorer classes of Dublin citizens selecting from their purchases. The fish offered for sale in this market and street is, each week-day, purchased at the fish auction held each morning of the week in the neighbourhood.

The ambulatory fish-sellers are very numerous in Dublin and about its suburbs; who are supplied with fish that will answer those whose purses are not heavy enough to allow their owners purchasing anything but low-priced fish. They are strong-built, strong-minded, and strong-tongued women, who give to their eyes a most minatory expression on being looked at, or when in the act of selling their fish; and their whole gait and manner of moving, and their general expression of countenance, proclaim their being always on the aggressive. On being challenged to dispose of their fish, they remove the baskets containing it from their heads with determination, and lay them down as if they wished in doing so to sink them in the ground; and then, taking the small boards attached to their baskets, or making use of their hands in lieu of fish-rests, with jaunty air, and one of their ears placed near to the wavering-to-purchase individuals' ears, in order to hear, if dareful enough, those persons' condemnation of their fish, and indicating in doing so to each of them the asking of the question, "Do you think yourself a judge of fish?" In the more private streets of our metropolis, from an early hour in the morning each week-day, may be heard the cries from these loud-voiced females, announcing various kinds of fish for sale, as "Fine Dublin Bay herring!" "Dublin Bay herring!" "Fine Dublin Bay herring!"

"Herrings all alive, alive, alive!" "Fresh herrings, fresh herrings!" "Here's fine Bay mackerel!" "Haddocks, haddocks!" "Fine fresh haddocks!" "Plaices!" "Black sole, black sole!" &c. Oysters are cried about by men, proclaiming, "Oysters, oysters!" Oysters in our metropolis are, generally speaking, purchased and eaten at oyster-shops and taverns. Bindon Burton's oyster-tavern is the most frequented by our citizens in Dublin, wherein a beautifully flavoured small oyster, from the county Clare coast, with a black beard, is offered for sale. In a tavern named the Carlisle, pleasantly situated, commanding a fine view of the custom-house and Dublin shipping, kept by an honest-hearted genuine son of Hibernia, a beautifully flavoured Irish oyster, the Carlingford, from Carlingford, below the town of Dundalk, at times is offered for sale; and the owner of this tavern, in order to guarantee their freshness to his customers eating them in his house, has been accustomed to have a boat from Carlingford, laden with these oysters, anchored in the river Liffey, opposite to the door of his tavern, and the boatmen belonging to this boat to open the oysters in the tavern, in order to more fully than otherwise realise to their eaters their perfect freshness.

A ludicrous story is related as to these oysters in respect to a pompous country squire of Ireland in having sent his servant to a boat containing these, lying alongside the Liffey wall, to procure for him some of those nice oysters, when his servant long delayed bringing them, in consequence of having met a country friend on his way from the boat to his master with the oysters, who played a practical joke upon him, in having asked him were the fish gutted, when he replied in the negative, to the seeming astonishment of his wide-awake friend, who politely saved him the trouble of gutting the oysters, by quickly performing himself the agreeable task, by opening and swallowing them; and on his appearing, asking him had he brought the oysters, to his chagrin produced the shells left by his kind friend just alluded to, and exclaimed in answer to his interrogatory, "Aye, and gutted too." Fruit is cried about in great quantities in Dublin by male and female criers of it. Fruit-criers make a harvest in Dublin by the sale of strawberries, as, in a plentiful season of this fruit, they can sell them as low as a penny a leaf, so bringing them in price to the level of the most slender purse. The chief source of their supply is the strawberry-beds on the banks of the Liffey, situate a little beyond the Phœnix Park, to which the citizens of Dublin cheaply proceed for fun and to eat strawberries. We hear in our streets the cries, "Ripe strawberries, ripe strawberries!" and "A penny a leaf—(pronounced "lafe" by the strawberry-criers)—a penny a leaf!" meaning a penny as the price of a leaf of strawberries by this intimation. Gooseberries in their unripe and ripe conditions are cried about our metropolitan streets by criers announcing for sale, "Green gooseberries, large gooseberries!" "Green gooseberries, fresh gooseberries!" "A penny a pint, ripe gooseberries!" "Two pints a penny, ripe gooseberries!" and "A penny a quart, ripe gooseberries." We also hear crying in our streets for sale, by vendors, "Apples, sixteen a penny!" "Cherries, ripe cherries!" "Oranges, a penny a-piece!" "Lemons, lemons!" "Ripe pears!" &c.

The Dublin fruit-criers are not confined to alone crying for sale fruits, but have recourse to announcing other articles for sale; still to fruit-selling they have a predilection. They rank amongst them very young

females, and some of these of remarkably good looks. In change of calling, the Dublin crier is often annoyed in crying a new article for sale, as instanced in a fish hawker having changed from selling fish to dealing in butter, in being unable to conquer the custom of her usual call, and on each mistake, irritably would exclaim, "Aull, butter, I mane." The most remarkable Dublin cries are those of political and extraordinary publications. A whole neighbourhood will be roused up by the criers of these, who invariably proceed in couples on different sides of the streets of their crying in, loudly announcing some cheap publication: as a melancholy account of an awful *shipwrack*, the letter of some popular politician, the powerful letter of the Rev. Dr. Cahill—say to Lord John Russell—twelve whole pages for the small charge of one penny, Paddy Nelly's budget, the rowling budget of fun, &c. Ballads are sold by the vendors singing, instead of crying, them for sale in the streets of Dublin. And coals are sold in our city's streets, hawked about by ambulatory coal-factors on drays, and announced for sale by bells ringing from being fastened to a portion of the harness of the horses as the horses drawing these drays move along. These coal vendors sell to the poorer classes of Dublin the coals used by them, yet at very advanced prices from those paid by their better-off neighbours for their coals; where these latter persons will pay 12s. a ton for coal, the former poor people will be charged for inferior kinds as high as 18s. a ton! There are a large number of coalmen in Dublin driving about drays containing coal, and with bells attached to the harness of the horses drawing them. These black diamond merchant purchase what coals they may require at our quays out of the English vessels containing coals brought from the English collieries. They are murky-looking personages; and sometimes are found as *black*-guards. The poor housekeepers of Dublin suffer much from the exorbitant prices exacted by them from their slender purses for inferior coals. A cry will be heard in our city's streets, on the mornings of Friday, from the throats of sturdy mountaineers, of "Free-sto, free-sto;" this is the announcement of freestone for sale by these men, who have brought it from the Dublin mountains. It is used by the Dublin cooks in scouring their kitchen tables. The price is low for this article, being sold in halfpenny-worths. Umbrella and parasol-menders in Dublin announce audibly their calling, as well as other petty merchants of the way, their avocations. Sufficient has been mentioned to give the reader of these pages, who is a stranger to our city cries, a perception of them, as well as a key towards the solution of their various seeming absurdities.

MISTAKEN.

BY JOHN NAULE ALLEN.

At the commencement of my present little story, it appears necessary I should inform my readers that I am of a singularly sensitive, susceptible, amorous disposition—I have been so from my very cradle. My whole life has been one perpetual falling quickly in love, and as quickly falling out of it. The strength of the first trait would lead me to suppose that I was in some way or other descended from Romeo and Juliet; the fatality of the second, that I was a near relative—of whom shall I say?—of any ill-used vagabond you like, who would have been a respectable citizen and the "father of a family," if men and circumstances would only have permitted him. How very few are treated according to their deserts! If I had been treated according to mine, I should have married an angel years ago, had various little cherubs around me now, had plenty of money, which I should have spent at Swann and Edgar's upon the angel and the cherubs; and I should be expending one half of my time in caressing them, and the other half with the angel at evening parties, the Lyceum Theatre, and Cremorne and Vauxhall. This would be just to my taste, and—for the greatest crime I ever committed was once to steal the pocket-handkerchief of one who had ravished me, and to offer to deny the fact on oath when afterwards charged with it (I had fallen out of love again then) *par conséquence* my deserts. Hamlet asks, who would escape whipping if all had their deserts? and I have no hesitation in saying that Alfred Dower—that's my name—would. If I might be allowed to speak parenthetically here, I would observe, that our English wife-beaters wouldn't; but then, as I said before, I am of an amorous disposition—I am an admirer and a lover of the gentle sex, and I think our legislators are not. With these preliminary remarks, I beg, ladies and gentlemen, to lay before you the following "oure true tale."

But stop: another virtue of mine, and as I have so many virtues it is hardly strange I should have omitted to mention it before, is, that whenever I receive an invite out to dine, or to an at-home, or to anything you like, I always give an answer directly; and therefore, when on the 8rd of last December I opened a pink note—that is, a note on pink paper—scented, from Mrs. Croole, requesting the honour—or the favour, I forget which—of a little party at her house on the 5th, I cast my eagle's eye around, and finding I had no engagement whatever for that night—for Hall's affair was not till the 7th, and the engagement I had with Miss Cottrell had been broken off the day before yesterday—I instantly dropped her a line, written in the most aristocratic, unreadable hand I could command, saying that I should be most happy, *et cetera*. My answer was despatched, and for the evening of the 4th of December my fate was sealed to 24, Gotch-street. Observe the address! Copy it.

I went: for I always do what I promise—another virtue. I went; and I wish I hadn't gone. I went in my usual quiet, neat style, different, very different, thank Heaven! from one I have now in my eye, whose very dress-coat, and choker, and boots were unusually loud, to say nothing of

his manner; one who was not, and, I dare be bound, is not aware that Boiste—for *his* information, a French writer—has said: "Tirer vanité de quelque chose c'est prouver qu'on n'y est pas accoutumé," and I will venture to say that, in spite of his fuss, with him an evening party was a rarity—bah! that a woman could be so blind as to prefer *him*—his name, I can hold out no longer, was Fane—prefer him to me! But women cannot distinguish between the good and the bad, and that accounts for the wife-beaters and the wives beaten. They ought to take care.

I saw how it would be before I had been at Mrs. Croole's a quarter of an hour. I knew that I should retire to my bed deeply, madly in love as usual, but as yet I had no idea as to who was to be the object of my adoration. Amid such a throng of bright, happy eyes and cheeks, maddening arms and throats, and beautiful *cerise* dresses, I was like a thoughtful bluebottle newly arrived at a butcher's shop—I did not know upon what or upon whom to fix. But when I had concluded that long polka with her, during which we talked—she so feelingly!—of Coleridge's "Love" and Tennyson's "Lord of Burleigh," I was determined to marry Miss Chapman, and to love her to my dying day. In a moment I had forgotten that my own income did not exceed a paltry two hundred a year, and—believe me—that she was worth two thousand pounds per annum. I thought of nothing, indeed, but love and—strange mixture you will say, oh man of the world!—marriage.

The polka ended, I of course clung to her all I could, and I flattered myself she clung to me; and when it was announced that a waltz was next, and the waltz one that I may truly and emphatically call my own, it being inscribed to me—"The Dower Polka," composed and dedicated to his friend Alfred Dower, Esq., by George Drax; you are doubtless well acquainted with it—I immediately requested the pleasure of dancing it with her, for here was a feather in my cap I was determined to wave. And I did waltz with her, and I informed her how closely allied I and the waltz music were—in my quiet unruffled style, as though I were used to such things. Perhaps you will be good enough to glance again at what Boiste says. Having sown this powerful and promising seed, I retired to the card-table for awhile to leave the seed time to take hold and shoot.

But I soon received convincing, yet unpleasant, proof of the excellence of my taste. I was told that the flower I had chosen from a score of flowers could be admired by other eyes than mine. I had hardly had time to feel myself in love with Miss Chapman, before I discovered that Fane was in love with her too; and I had no sooner taken my eyes off Fane than I found that Willis had his eyes set on *mon ange*, like a man that was sea-sick gazing on the boatswain. Well, I am not a coward. I was inclined neither to despair nor faint. If I had some slight desire to thrash them both for their audacity, that was a little weakness with which I am sure gentlemen will not find fault, and at which I hope ladies will wink; yet I neither fainted, nor fought, nor despaired, but preserved that quiet, neat style, which I believe I mentioned before, and which is natural to me. Yet I was not comfortable. I cared little or nothing about Willis, the sea-sick gentleman, but Fane occasioned me some uneasiness; not but that he was infinitely inferior to myself, but,

as I just remarked, women cannot distinguish. But I will generously confess here, that Fane has not a bald head, and I think he would not ill-treat his wife. Willis was a fat, white, sleepy fellow—like a broken seal, not at all likely to make a good impression. Fane was a bit—and and a good bit—of a rake, much inclined to be ultra in fashion, a loud, impudent fellow, and pretty good-looking; that sable cloak of his especially—but no, no; sit still, my soul.

I am afraid I am writing somewhat disjointedly, but what of that?—neither Junius nor Addison would have been models for style—unless it were a disjointed style, if they had suffered what I have, if they had written in such a state of mind as that in which I write as I think of my misfortunes. I merely wish to say, that I looked upon Willis as a contemptible, unfearable rival, and upon Fane as rather dangerous.

Fane danced with her, and so did Willis. Upon the former I cast a glance occasionally, in my promiscuous manner: the latter I scarcely deigned to regard at all. I saw that Miss Chapman smiled when he spoke, and chatted agreeably with him; but this I attributed to the good nature of a sylph pestered by a bore. Although she appeared indifferent to Fane, I thought there might be some assumption of indifference there, for I feared him. Results have proved the correctness of my judgment.

The last virtue of mine—at least, the last that I shall name—is that I sing an excellent comic song. I can also conjure with orange-peel, and imitate Charles Kean and Mr. Wright. You might think all this foreign to the quiet melancholy of my disposition, and so it is, no doubt; but as pale, weak, poetical men always sing robust sea and national songs, while fellows with enormous corporations and red faces choose to warble tender ditties, there should be no wonder that I, whose soul is full of poetry, should like to indulge occasionally in burlesque before company. But I cannot help informing you—disjointedly to be in keeping with the rest of my chapter—that at supper I did not conjure at all, further than mutely conjuring the fates to help me, and that after supper, instead of singing "Billy Taylor," with all the variations and grimaces, I broke out pathetically with "My love thou art a beautiful flower," at which all present unaccountably laughed as if it were comic—as the men at the dinner laughed at Theodore Hook when he was in a passion.

With every moment the pangs of my love increased, and yet with every kind glance I received from her eye—and such glances were many—my hope grew stronger. For the whole of that night I was in dream-land—dreaming of marrying her, with Fane looking helplessly and distractedly on, while Willis went to drown himself—of angels and cherubs, and Swann and Edgar, and the Lyceum, and Cremorne and Vauxhall, as usual; and by the time the last guests were preparing to depart, and Miss Chapman and I, and Willis and Fane were of them, I felt doubly heroic, and thrice armed to work my way to the empire of love—and thereby hangs my tale.

I think about half a dozen of us had secured our hats, and over-coats, and cloaks (oh, d—n those cloaks!) and what not, and were just descending the staircase. I was on the landing, Miss Chapman was near me, and Fane was not far off, while Willis was half-way down—when suddenly the lamp went out, and left us in the dark. In an instant a tumultuous throng of images flitted across my brain—Romeo and Juliet, Abelard and Héloïse, Faint Heart never won Fair Lady, Here goes!—

and with my usual quickness of thought, I turned to the spot where she was standing when I last saw her, and seized the fair object in my arms. Immediately its arms were thrown around my neck.

"Dearest!" I passionately whispered.

And it was answered—"Angel!"

I had not expected quite so much as this, and was so much the more delighted. I hugged the mantled form more closely, and was just placing my lips to those lips, when Brills, who was a great smoker, had lit a match and the lamp, and showed me that I was

Embracing Fane,

and showed Fane that he was

Embracing me.

It also showed us that, at the foot of the stairs, Willis had hold of Miss Chapman's hand making love, while she was smiling and blushing, apparently well pleased.

I, of course, went to bed in an ill-humour, and arose in the morning to find fault with my toast and coffee, and Fane and I have hated each other to this good day.

But this is not the end. She cared nothing about Willis; that was all a joke, and now she is going to marry Fane, and as I have just heard this I have sat me down to show how near I have been to two thousand a year, and the mistake I made while after its possessor. I do not write this true little history for critics, but for people with tender feelings, who can sympathise with misfortune. There is no style, but a disjointed one, and no originality whatever in it; but I am very miserable, as I happen to be in love with nobody just now—and I have just now heard the news; and so, ladies and gentlemen, I remain, in haste, yours obediently.

THE LAST OF THE HOUSE.

By William Pickersgill, Esq.

XVI.

THE ADVENTURE IN THE PARK.

The narrative referred to by Broadface in the preceding chapter will be more intelligible if, instead of allowing him to relate the story, we relate it for him in the third person.

A few nights ago he had been at some distance from the town, and it was already eleven o'clock when he commenced his homeward journey. It was quite fair when he started, although it was intensely dark, and he was scarcely able to see a finger before him. The wind was rather high, but it was evident that as soon as it ceased large quantities of rain would descend, as dark clouds had been threatening for some hours. The road on which his journey lay was extremely lonely, there not being a house of any description for some miles. Although Broadface was a man of considerable nerve, and by no means in the habit of yielding to the childish fears which so frequently beset men on occasions of the kind, yet the darkness and the late hour of the night, coupled with the incomprehensible occurrences which had so recently taken place at the

Hall, threw a certain degree of despondency and gloom over his mind, to which he had long been a stranger. There was another reason for his unusual depression of spirits. His nearest way to Morlington lay through the park of the Old Hall, and unless he took that path he would be obliged to make a circuit of at least three miles. This matter in particular caused him much uneasiness. He had an instinctive feeling that something was about to happen—he knew not what—something, however, of an unusual character—something differing widely from aught that had ever occurred to him before. Strong and vigorous as the man was, he was unnerved—he was beset with a thousand misgivings, which caused the blood to run cold in his veins, and a sickly hue to overspread his features.

It is on seasons of this kind, when no mortal is near—when darkness hath cast her thick mantle over the whole face of nature—when not a sound is heard save the wind rustling amongst the trees, or peradventure driving the withered leaves rapidly before it; and when a place said to be subject to visitations from the inhabitants of the dark and invisible world of shadows is near, that the mind is filled with thoughts which, perhaps, never occurred to it before, and throws aside much of the levity that formerly characterised it. This is the test by which the sceptic ought to be tried, for however headstrong he may be on other occasions, the chances are that he will at least be respectful and grave in his demeanour on one like the present. There are many circumstances which frequently come under our observation, which would seem to imply that a connexion between our own and the invisible world subsists. It is difficult to say the precise nature of it—it is difficult to say by what means that connexion is carried on, but reason and experience tend to show that it exists. Broadface was a believer in these phenomena. His experience on a former occasion had dispelled all doubts that he might at one time have entertained upon this subject. He was, therefore, thoroughly alive to the discomforts of his situation. The wind as it careered past frequently alarmed him, and caused him to turn suddenly round.

When he had reached the gate leading to the park he was unable to stand, and was obliged to support himself by the railing. In a few minutes he had acquired sufficient strength to proceed on his journey. He debated with himself as to whether he should go round or take the path by the park, but the hour being late, and thinking that, perhaps, there was no occasion after all for alarm, he entered it. He had proceeded a few hundred yards without anything occurring which was calculated to add to the misgivings which already haunted his mind, and caused him so much uneasiness. At length, however, he fancied he heard footsteps behind him—he turned round, but nothing was visible. He pressed on. Still the footsteps seemed to haunt him: the occasion of them appeared to be only a few paces behind. He again turned about, but nothing but the thick darkness met his gaze. He had been deceived. It was fancy—an idle imagination, that was trifling with his fears. Pshaw! What could there be there at that hour of the night? Thus he endeavoured to persuade himself that he was the victim of delusion. He was, however, soon convinced that it could be no delusion, for he again heard the sounds very distinctly. When he ceased walking the noise died away—when he pressed forward it was resumed. He would

have retraced his steps if he could have done so conveniently, but the fact was he had accomplished nearly half the distance of the park. He had now reached the most sequestered part of it. He had gained the bottom of a somewhat precipitous descent, and on either side of him was a thick row of trees. He trembled in every limb, and the perspiration streamed from every pore in his body. His mouth was dry and parched. He would have given all he possessed for a draught of water. Never before had he felt such trepidation—never before had his mind been filled with so gloomy a picture of horrors as on the present occasion. He pressed forward, though his limbs were tottering and scarcely able to support him. If he could only have got out of this accursed place—if he could but reach once more the high road, all might still be well. It appeared as if he were in the midst of them. His imagination pictured to him things which in reality had no existence. They were hovering in the air—before his face—behind his back—they sat in the branches of the trees—they dogged his footsteps—they were everywhere: he could not escape them. Oh! for one ray of light—a single star in the opaque firmament above, to dispel in some degree the darkness by which he was surrounded. Oh! for the sound of a human voice to drive away that sense of loneliness by which he was oppressed. He was cut off from all assistance—left to the mercy of those mysterious beings whose antics could only be prompted by the most damnable wickedness. On he pressed—he doubled his pace, but he could not walk quick enough. The sounds of the footsteps still rung in his ears—they grew every moment more and more audible. His pursuers were evidently gaining upon him. He did not run, but he walked at his utmost speed; still they were advancing upon him—still they were endeavouring to overtake him. Whence the infernal malice that had prompted them to such a step? How had he deserved such persecution? It was believed that when spirits returned to the earth it was for good purposes—to redress the wrongs of those that were oppressed—to pour vengeance upon the head of the oppressor—to reveal secrets and hidden treasures to those still in the flesh. This was their avowed mission. He was unconscious of having done aught that could have merited so terrible a punishment. If the late occupant of the Hall had committed crimes which had conjured up these evil ministers, he had in no degree been a participator in them, and therefore ought to be exempt from any participation in the punishment. These were the reflections that forced themselves upon his mind as he hurried along. He became afraid to look around, for he was convinced that evil spirits were already close behind him.

The wind having gradually fallen, the rain began to descend. At first it fell gently, but ere many minutes had elapsed it poured down in great abundance. By this time Broadface had reached the Hall, from which he was not more than twenty or thirty yards distant. The path unfortunately compelled him to pass the building at this point. He continued his rapid pace, although he was so exhausted that he expected every moment he should drop down with fatigue. The path was now a gradual ascent from the Hall. He had not proceeded much further before it became necessary to make a pause, in order that he might have time to recruit his exhausted strength. The sounds of the footsteps were still audible, though not so distinctly as before. He succeeded in scrambling into the branches of a tree which stood near him, and which afforded him

every facility for climbing. The noise that had so recently annoyed him at length became inaudible, and he heard nothing save the rain pattering against the earth and occasionally the wind moaning amongst the trees.

XVII.

THE SPECTRE FUNERAL.

HAVING ascended the tree, he had not long been in this position before he found that his situation was open to a great objection, inasmuch as it was quite opposite to the Hall, and from which he had a full view of the front of the building. To his great surprise he observed lights in several of the windows. The Hall apparently was again the abode of these mysterious beings. What was going forward it was difficult to conjecture, but the greatest animation appeared to prevail within. Hark! melodious sounds appeared to be issuing from the house. He listened attentively—again the sounds fell upon his ear. It was as though a number of persons were singing in chorus. The voices blended well together, but the music was plaintive and sad. He was unable, however, to distinguish any of the words. What could those sounds imply? It was the first time that tones of this kind had been heard. Music had frequently been heard before, but it had always been instrumental. Although Broadface was suffering from the greatest alarm and excitement, his curiosity was aroused, and being besides really afraid to descend the tree, he closely watched the proceedings at the Old Hall. The singing continued for several minutes, but when it had ceased he observed that the lights disappeared from many of the windows. He remained for a considerable time watching closely, but nothing further seemed likely to occur, and he was endeavouring to gain courage to descend to the ground, when, God of Heaven, the great gate of the Hall was thrown open. It is impossible to describe the feeling of awe that crept over Broadface as he witnessed this event. He swooned, and would have fallen from the tree, but luckily a projecting branch intercepted his fall. In a few seconds he had sufficiently recovered to observe all that was taking place. His proximity to the Hall, and his elevated position, enabled him to see everything with considerable distinctness. He observed that six figures, clad in white vestments, stood in the porch—three on either side, each of whom bore in his hand a large torch, the flaring light of which distinctly illuminated the surrounding objects. In the centre of the porch, and elevated upon some trestles, lay a long, dark object, but what it was, it was difficult to determine. As the figures stood in the position described, they appeared to be grave and sad, and to hold no communication with each other. As the lights fell upon the faces of the torch-bearers, Broadface was horror-stricken and amazed to discover that their faces were divested of all flesh. The nose was eaten away, and the eyes were scooped out of their cavities. He had beheld no sight so horrible as this, and he shuddered when it entered into his contemplation. The figures having remained some time in this position, several more appeared, some clad in white, others in black. They passed rapidly to and fro for several minutes, but at length they began to form a procession. The torch-bearer went first. A tall figure with white robes, ornamented in various parts with the figure of the cross, and bearing in his hand a large gilded one with the

effigy of our Saviour affixed to it, went next—four others, wearing dark garments, came afterwards, and bearing upon their shoulders the dark oblong object which we have described as resting upon the trestles in the porch, and which Broadface supposed to be a coffin. A large black pall, with a white satin border, was thrown over it. Two figures enveloped in black cloaks followed in the rear.

The rain up to this time had been falling fast, but the procession had no sooner emerged from the porch than it came down in torrents, and as it beat upon what appeared to be the coffin, it fell with a deep and hollow sound. It would be difficult to describe the thoughts that alternately flitted through the mind of Broadface, as this mysterious procession passed before him. They were numerous and perplexing. He began to ask himself, if the spectacle he beheld were really intended for a funeral: if so, was it really a corpse that the coffin contained? Were the figures that formed the procession actually endowed with the attributes of those still in the flesh, or were they shadows without substance—intangible and evanescent? Again, whither was the procession to proceed—in what place was the body (if it were a body) to be deposited? It appeared altogether inconsistent with reason to suppose that the figures were actually those of persons living. The skulls which were upon their shoulders—the hour of the night—the character of the house from which they had issued, all appeared to show as emphatically as possible that the funeral that was passing before his eyes was a spectral one—that they who took a part in it were evil spirits, sent for some purpose unknown to mortals, to infest and cause disturbances in a house in which crimes of the darkest character were said to have been perpetrated. The circumstances attending his last visit to the Old Hall now recurred to him. Was the funeral at all in connexion with the corpse which he had seen stretched upon the bed in the "Tapestried Chamber?" Some time had certainly elapsed since that occasion, but still there appeared to be a connexion between the present proceedings and those he had previously been an eye-witness to.

The procession slowly moved on towards the garden, which lay to the right of the Hall. The singing was again resumed, and it was of the same character as that to which Broadface had previously listened. They passed through the gateway of the garden, and having walked half-way round, they stood beneath a tall elm-tree. The coffin was lifted from the shoulders of the bearers, and placed upon the ground. The rain, which continued to fall with great violence, caused the torches to give a somewhat feeble light, and the proceedings at the grave were on that account not quite so apparent to Broadface as they might have been if the weather had been favourable. Whilst the coffin rested upon the ground, the figures stood around, and appeared to be engaged in singing, for the sweetest tones still floated in the air. They stood in this position nearly half an hour. At length the coffin appeared to be placed upon slings, and finally lowered into its last resting-place. Some of the figures habited in the dark vestments, and who had borne the coffin, then commenced to fill up the grave with the earth that was heaped up on both sides of it; the rest stood around whilst this was being done. When the work appeared to be finished, as quick as thought the music ceased, and the lights and figures altogether disappeared.

If any doubt remained in Broadface's mind as to the nature of the dreadful and mysterious spectacle of which he had been a witness, it was

now completely removed. Those that he had seen belonged not to this world. They were denizens of that dark world of shadows into which no mortal had ever been suffered to enter.

Some time elapsed before Broadface was able to descend from the tree. When, however, he was capable of accomplishing this, he found himself weak and ill, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he contrived to reach his home. Fever ensued, and he was confined to his bed for upwards of a week.

Whilst Broadface related the above narrative as nearly as possible to the foregoing effect, Horncastle sat listening to him the whole of the time in the most breathless excitement. Sometimes his face grew pale, at others a smile of incredulity passed over his features.

"There, Maister Horncastle," said Broadface, when he had finished, "that be summat to talk aboot I think—it be a strainge stoary beant it?"

"Aye, aye, Mr. Broadface, its very odd, very unaccountable."

"If thou had been i' my pleace, I think thou nivir would ha' kum'd whoam alive—thou would ha' drapped doon deed wi' fear."

"Yes—yes, there was some reason for alarm, Broadface," said the old man, abstractedly.

Horncastle rose from his seat, and walking towards the door, said:

"Thank you, Mr. Broadface, for your story. Good night."

"What, thou beant going already, mun?"

"It grows late, and I am an old man."

"Aye, marry," said Broadface, as soon as he had gone, "thou has had thy curiosity gratified, and that be all thou cares for. Howsever, thy room is as good as thy company, for if all be true thou beest a strange fellow, and not much good in thee neither."

XVIII.

THE MISER'S TREASURE.

HORNCASTLE proceeded straight to his lodgings. It was a cold, raw night, and myriads of stars were shining with a peculiar brilliancy in the blue vault above him. The passengers whom he met, with few exceptions, were well covered up in coats and cloaks; but they still hurried on, as though anxious to reach their homes, and to keep themselves warm by active exercise. Horncastle had no coat or covering upon him, and the cold pinched him severely. He was glad when he reached his lodging, although his room was cold and comfortless, and in which a fire had never been lit since he entered, because it was a luxury in which he dared not indulge. Mrs. Wallford admitted him, and seeing that he was cold, said:

"Will you walk into the parlour, Mr. Horncastle, and warm yourself? I am sure you must be cold, and there is no fire in your own room."

"No—no; I am going to bed. I shall soon get warm."

Mrs. Wallford took from the table a candlestick, in which was stuck about the half of a rushlight, which she was in the act of lighting, when Horncastle said:

"Never mind lighting my candle, if you please—that's extravagance. It will only burn and waste as I go up-stairs. I will light it in my room."

Mrs. Wallford handed him the candle, without making any remark,

and he proceeded up-stairs. When he had reached his room he carefully locked and bolted his door, looked under his bed and into every closet in the place. He then drew out his flint and steel, and lighted his candle, which threw a dull sickly gleam over the apartment. From a little cupboard he took a stale crust of bread and cheese, which he began to eat with an appetite apparently sharpened by long fasting. When he had finished his meal he drew from under his bed a small box, which he placed upon a chair. He took a key from his bosom, which he applied to the lock. He then raised the lid, and took from the box three bags, which he placed upon the table. He put his hand into one of them, and drew from it a handful of gold. He counted it so adroitly that its chinking could not be heard, and placed it in a heap upon the table. He drew out another handful, and counted it in the same manner, and again placed it upon the table. In this way he counted the contents of the three bags, and being satisfied that none had been abstracted, he sat gloating over his glittering heaps, piled upon the table before him. He took occasionally a coin up and examined it minutely for a few minutes, and then laid it upon the heap from which he had taken it.

"All mine—all mine," said the old man. "They have cost me labour and anxiety, but my efforts have been crowned with success. I could live like a gentleman—give dinners—keep company—ride in my carriage—be respected if I liked. Ha, ha! be respected. I could have all kinds of people cringing about me. Wherever I went I should meet nothing but smiles and welcome. I could have all kinds of things sent me—presents of every description—rich, beautiful presents, and all because I don't want them—because they are of no use to me. If I wanted them it would be a different thing. Ha, ha! I couldn't have them—no, of course not. It's all because I don't want them. Yes, influence would be mine. I might command and be obeyed. I should have attributed to me virtues to which I have no claim—talents which I possess not—all the goodness of which human nature is capable would be centred in myself. Oh! potent minister, whence springs thy ascendancy? In days of old, men worshipped a multiplicity of gods, now they worship thee alone—they lie, rob, murder, persecute, for the love of thee—they are ready to sell themselves, body and soul, to obtain thee. There was a time when I was poor—a beggar—when I lacked both food and raiment—when men spurned and jolted me in the street, and seemed to say, 'Out of the way, beggar'—when I was shunned and despised, and driven from rich men's doors—when the canopy of heaven was my only covering, and a few wild berries my only subsistence—when I was denied the loan of a few paltry pounds, that I would have toiled night and day to repay. I have outlived it—braved every insult and wrong it could inflict—yes, have outlived it; but I bear its impress deep upon my memory, and which death only can efface.

Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.

The times are changed. All that was then denied I could now possess. Why is this? Am I better than I was? Not a whit. The reason is that I do not want favours—ha, ha! I will have no friends—no companions. I will love nought but these gold pieces—they shall be my friends and my companions. They are faithful, and they will not desert their master in adversity."

Having thus apostrophised the gold, Horncastle counted it carefully into the bags, which, having replaced in the box, he locked it, and thrust it again under the bed. He laid the key under his pillow, as he was always accustomed to do, and prepared to retire for the night.

He suddenly bethought himself of a letter which he had received that day, and which he now pulled from his pocket. He glanced hastily over the pages, and thrust it again into his pocket.

"I will read it again in the morning—it's late. I should only be wasting candle. I must not be extravagant—no, no. I must be very careful—poverty's a dreadful thing."

Before getting into bed he again tried the door to see if it was safe—looked into the closets and under the bed, and having convinced himself that no danger was to be apprehended, he threw himself down and endeavoured to find repose. Thoughts, however, pressed thick upon his mind, and scared slumber from his eyes. He began to think of his treasures, and to count his gain in perspective.

"50 times 5," he muttered, "is 250, and 80 times 3 is 240, and 60 times $3\frac{1}{2}$ is 210—these added together will be 700. Ah! I must take care of it—great care of it. It would soon go if I were extravagant."

"Ha! what was that?" he said, starting up as the sound of a door clashing below was heard. "Robberies have been very common lately. I read of two or three in the papers only yesterday; and these country places are favourable for them. I must see what this noise means."

He accordingly arose from his bed, and having slipped a few of his garments on, he lighted his candle and opened his door. He listened for some minutes upon the top of the stairs.

"I do not hear anything," he said, "but 'tis as well to be safe. I will go down and see if aught be going forward. I am afraid Mrs. Wallford is not very particular; perhaps she has forgot to bolt the street-door."

He descended the stair and entered the room used by the family as a parlour, but it was empty. He proceeded to the street-door, and having ascertained that it was secured he returned to his room. He took the key from the pillow to see if it were safe, and having replaced it, got into bed.

He again tried to compose himself to sleep, but without success. Figures of all kinds flitted through his mind, and he commenced afresh his computations. For hours he was thus engaged, and although he repeatedly tried to banish these thoughts from his mind, it was all in vain. They haunted him in spite of himself. At length his thoughts took another direction, and he began to ponder upon the singular narrative which Broadface had communicated to him, and attempted to find a solution to the mystery in which it was involved.

"It is very odd," he said—"very. It's difficult to account for such proceedings."

He fell asleep at last, but he was exceedingly restless, and rolled about from side to side. Sometimes he would start suddenly up as though he fancied somebody was in the room, and again his head would sink upon the pillow. Thus the old man passed the night, and when the morning dawned upon him it found him awakened from a restless and unrefreshing slumber.

A BATCH OF NEW BOOKS.

JEROME CARDAN.*

The attempt made to place on record the lives of some of the more eminent worthies of bygone times in the shape of a biographical romance, preserving all the forms, the quaintness, and even the learning of the epoch, in the life of Palissy the Potter, has evidently been successful, as it has been followed by a biographical sketch, on a similar plan, of another strange and original mediæval figure—that of Girolamo Cardano, of Milan, physician. Certainly the life of a philosopher whose voluminous writings are more marked by individuality of character, or who reflects more strictly the spirit of the age in which he lived, could not have been well selected. The most successful scientific author of his time, yet he describes agates as promoting sleep, and one, which displayed pre-eminent virtue that way, had incorporated in it a substance—a profile nearly resembling that of the Emperor Galba! He was not only the popular philosopher, but also the fashionable physician of the sixteenth century. Pope and emperor sought him; kings, princes, cardinals, archbishops were among his patients. Yet was this man deeply penetrated with the truths of judicial astrology—a man more credulous over dreams than any silly girl, observing them scrupulously in himself and others; a man who believed that he had the friendship of a demon, who by marvellous signs warned him of perils; a man who himself saw and heard things never heard or seen by any other man! There were (says his biographer) other physicians in those days wise enough to be less credulous on many points, but greater wisdom did not win for them an equal fame. A lesson for those who move on too rapidly for their time. Cardan obtained a splendid reputation, not so much because he was a man of power and genius, but because he spent much of his energy upon ideas that, foolish as they now seem, were conceived in the true spirit of his age. The life of such a man must be manifestly a picture of strange times, and one full of character and individuality; but it so happens also that Jerome Cardan's life was not a little chequered by domestic sorrows, by travel, and by incidents of various kinds. His very entrance into this world of trouble, amusingly related by our author, is a long and curious story of Milanese scandal, and the manner in which he earned a most holy and most happy godfather not a little characteristic of the Church to which he belonged; battle and murder, plague, pestilence, and famine attended upon his early years; he received warnings, and believed in spiritual knockings; he married on account of a dream; he became lecturer, professor, and public disputant; he travelled to Paris, London, and Edinburgh at a truly interesting epoch in history; he suffered much from family afflictions, more especially from the misconduct of his son; and he was finally to be met with in the streets of Rome a sorrowful old man, whose hopes were wrecked, walking with the strange, unsteady gait of a lunatic, dressed unlike other people, a man to be wondered at by strangers, and by his own friends apparently considered mad. He died as he had lived, an emblem of the close alliance that exists between philosophy and folly.

* The Life of Girolamo Cardano, of Milan, Physician. By Henry Morley. 2 vols. Chapman and Hall.

PURPLE TINTS OF PARIS.*

This is a pleasantly written book. The author has an easy way with the reader; he avowedly abominates stiffness, be it physical or mental, and he allows his pen to glibe as readily as we can imagine his tongue to do. How his "Purple Tints of Paris" will be looked upon by the more respectable classes of society in that metropolis of luxury and civilisation, we will not venture to propound; nor is it, indeed, necessary, for the said tints are almost entirely borrowed from those realms which are totally ignored by the fastidious high-bred Parisian. Henri Murger, the unrivalled painter of student life, the Herodotus of the Bohemians of art and literature, declares that every man who enters upon either a literary or an artistic career, without any other resources than art or literature themselves, will be obliged to traverse the devious pathways of Bohemia. If the reader wishes for further explanation of what we mean, we may refer him to the history of Agricole Passager and his partner Fifine, as related by Mr. Bayle St. John,—the picture of the *Crémerie*—the story of Madame Adèle—and other sketches of "intellectual gipsydom," as our author has it from Murger, but evidently drawn by him from his own practical experiences.

Apart from, and indeed with, these descriptions of a life of outcasts in Parisian society—taking them at their real value—not so much as descriptive of a people as of a class—a young, thoughtless, wild, and immoral set—Mr. Bayle St. John's work is still full of vivid, highly-coloured pictures, and amusing and instructive reflections. His democratic tendencies and his dislike to the present ruler are, however, brought forward (even to remarks upon the empress) with questionable taste at the present moment. Every man has a right to his political convictions; but such convictions may, as we see daily in political life, become a positive bore at times. Not so, however, are our author's admirable portraitures of the Parisian *bourgeoisie*, especially of women and girls—of marriage generally—of French politicians, soldiers, and workmen—and of all the little matters—eating, drinking; walking, talking; reading and writing—which make up daily life everywhere, but which assume a particular character in Paris—a character of which Mr. Bayle St. John has brought out into bold relief some of the more prominent features, but not all. A perfect picture of Parisian life would require a kaleidescopic artist; but none familiar with it but will read the present work with revived feelings of a consciousness of the strange things that have been and still are in that most versatile and seditious of all the capitals of the world.

AGNES VALMAR.†

There are some persons who are extremely eloquent upon the passions, and who yet have never fully owned their sway. In such, intellect, imagination, and feeling, often degenerating into morbid sentimentality, keep the passions in check. Such has been the case with some of our popular poetesses; such is, indeed, too commonly the case with the intellectually gifted—the literary and philosophic maid or matron and the woman of strong mind.

Agnes Valmar is a remarkable case in point. Adorned with every charm which can make woman lovely, she marries early in life without affection, only to weave a net, half of fancy, half of feeling, around the person of a young ward of hers—by name Walter Maldon. Walter grows up and goes abroad, not

* Purple Tints of Paris. Character and Manners in the New Empire. By Bayle St. John. 2 vols. Chapman and Hall.

† Agnes Valmar. A Novel. 3 vols. Chapman and Hall.

without unmistakable evidences of mutual esteem having been exchanged on both sides; Mr. Landor dies; Agnes Landor, the young widow, nurses an elderly stranger in sickness; he leaves her boundless wealth; Agnes becomes Lady Valmar, and her society is courted by the titled and the distinguished of the land.

Still, her heart, or her fancy, yearn for her young playmate; she wishes to benefit Walter out of the superabundance of her good fortune; she does so by tantalising him, not letting him know, first, that she is a widow, and secondly, that she is wealthy and a peeress. These little facts do come out, however, at last, and Walter, encouraged by the same manifestations of affection which had been shown of yore, brings the fair widow to the point. But marry she will not; she will make any sacrifice, he may live with her, share her wealth, nay, when very naturally taxed with want of womanly feeling, she consents to any sacrifice (see vol. i. p. 214) so long as she does not fetter her lover for ever! All this because she is somewhat older than Walter, and she does not think it honourable to thwart his prospects in life.

What are the consequences? Walter marries a peer's heartless daughter; is jilted by her, and kills his father-in-law in a duel. Agnes travels about with all kinds of imaginary, or, at all events, self-inflicted miseries and woes in company with her, and which she alleviates by a little innocent, but rather warm, flirtation with a Lord Charles. Lord Charles turns out, however, to be a noble fellow; he discovers the real state of things, brings Walter, the parricide, to Agnes, the too scrupulous widow, and the novel closes with the usual long-deferred union—such a one as most persons would be sorry to pit their happiness upon. As a work of art, no doubt "Agnes Valmar" possesses merits of a high order—a single-minded, well-purposed tale—the story of the lives and hearts of two strangely loving and strangely misguided persons; the delicate point upon which the interest is made to hang is cleverly delineated, and worked out with great force of language and vivid power of description; the play of the passions is at times nobly portrayed—but, alas! we are always made to feel that the reality is not there.

THE POOR MAN'S PALACE.*

The glittering arches have risen up as sudden and as wonderful as those of Mammon's Pandemonium. For thirty miles they are seen flashing like beacon lights when the sun shines upon them, gold at dawning and red at sunset. From the broad Surrey Down, now a perfect field of gold with wild flowers, you may see them, and from the hills, at whose feet the Mole burrows with sudden fear, like the Arethusa, you discern them radiant and lustrous as a home of enchantment, or as a bastion of Bunyan's Bright Citye. The author of this work has supplied a desideratum. He does not pretend to give a mere catalogue to each object in the Palace, but he has succeeded in conveying a picturesque and vivid impression of the train of poetical, historical, and legendary associations with which the visitor should prepare his mind in order to feel the true local colouring of each of the ten chief courts. In Egypt he gives the character of its climate, atmosphere, and vegetation, a short outline of its history, and the phenomena of the inundations, and sketches briefly the various animals that tread its sands or burrow beside its tombs. In the Pompeian Court he gives an outline of Roman life, of the theatre, the bath, the banquet-room, the arena, and the palace. In the Greek Court he traces the growth of the Greek mind, its perfect balance of the physical and spiritual, glances at its mythology, and finally reviews the various statues that adorn this department

* The Ten Courts of the Crystal Palace. Routledge and Co., Farringdon-street.

of the building. In the Alhambra he paints Spanish climate and Spanish manners, and gives a short history of the Alhambra and its legends. In the Assyrian he furnishes an abridgment of Layard's books, and depicts, graphically, Eastern scenes, and the associations of the ancient world as compared with the present. In the Byzantine he traces the origin of the Gothic art in the corruptions of the Roman, mingled with debasements of the Greek. He points the perfect consummation of this style in St. Mark's and St. Sophia, and in the Mediæval Court shows how gradually it gave birth to a purer and more refined style, full of aspirations, always progressing, and full of all the spirit of Christianity, but blended here and there with an unamalgamated stone of Paganism, a Pagan fable, or a Pagan god, built up into a cathedral wall. In the Renaissance and Italian Courts our author concludes by tracing the degradation of this style by the revival of classical art, without its real living principle, into a conglomeration of tasteless luxury and meretricious ornament.

BOKINGA.*

A COVER in pink and gold, and a frontispiece of a fair child yclept *la Princesse*, meetly herald the tales and traits of fashionable life recorded of Bokinga, and of those associated with its proud recluse. The language is that of the boudoir and the drawing-room, thrown like a tinselled veil over the passions of every-day life, and deeds that would shame the commonalty. Many of the characters possibly have existed, and if not, they will equally leave a lasting impression upon the reader. Such are Lady Wolverton, an extreme specimen of the very fashionable and egotistical mother, who reaches the climax of her sensual and selfish career when she robs her own daughter of her husband. Such are also Christina Calder, whose pride and haughtiness are rather overdrawn; for what do they lead to?—to her devoting herself to celibacy in Bokinga, a fine property thrown into her lap by an Indian nabob, and adopting two children, whom we are all along led to suppose are the deserted offspring of her sister, Lady Marion Calder, but who turn out to be the children of her brother Julian by a certain Thérèse de Chaumont—not a badly depicted specimen of the criminal-fashionable class of Parisian belles. One of these children, Mildred, surnamed *la Princesse*, is, in point of beauty, the heroine of "Bokinga;" but the greatest interest of these strange and motley scenes in the great drama of human life do not centre round her person. Florence Foxland and her worldly *roué* lover, Egremont; Shaftoe Calder and the fair Ilda, come in for a large share of the said well-devised and well-sustained interest. A chapter called *Les confidences*, and which said confidences are exchanged in a Parisian *café* between the two *roués*, Captain Staunton, husband of Lady Marion Calder, and lover of her mother, Lady Wolverton, and Philip Egremont, a gambler and gay seducer, is one of the best in the book; and the discovery of Marie Staunton is a well-managed little bit of poetic retribution. Altogether, "Bokinga" will command many readers, for, although brief, it is full of well-told incidents in "fashionable" life—a life from which, if one-half that is written about it is true, we should say Heaven preserve us!

ROME, REGAL AND REPUBLICAN.†

THE object of this work is to exhibit a purified picture of ancient Rome in all her stages of conquest, civilisation, literature, and art, exhibiting her struggles for constitutional liberty, her ages of natural virtue—the gradual

* Bokinga. A Novel. By Morton Rae. With Illustrations. Hookham and Sons.

† Rome, Regal and Republican. A Family History of Rome. By Jane Margaret Strickland. Edited by Agnes Strickland. Arthur Hall, Virtue, and Co.

growth of luxury, her passage to absolute despotism, her revival with Christianity, and her decay and final fall.

This great task has been manifestly undertaken with a full sense of its importance and high bearings; the tone and the spirit of the work rise up to the magnitude of the theme; the work, as far as it goes, is eloquent without being diffuse, learned without being pedantic. We hope it will not stop at "Rome, Regal and Republican," but will comprise that which is yet wanted in our literature—a faithful delineation of the early history of the Christian Church in connexion with Rome, and not with Romanism; its trials and struggles, its moral and civilising influence, and its unfortunate declension from its pristine purity of doctrine and simplicity of practice.

WRIGHT'S WANDERINGS OF AN ANTIQUARY.*

Tradition has handed down the antiquary in a stereotype fashion. As old and withered as the objects of his cares and anxieties, with body bent, spectacled nose, and a few scattered grey hairs, he is ever poring over illegible inscriptions, or furbishing up bits of rusty iron. His books of reference are black-lettered, his shelves dusty, his cat ancient, his fire out, his outer and inner man uncared for; he is a miser of the worst class—a miser of the times gone by:

> With vigilance and fasting worn to skin
> And bone, and wrapped in most debasing rags.

The antiquary, said Samuel Butler, is one that has his being in this age, but his life and conversation is in the days of old. His days were spent and gone long before he came into the world; and since, his only business is to collect what he can out of the ruins of them. He has so strong a natural affection to anything that is old, that he may truly say to dust and worms, "You are my father;" and to rottenness, "Thou art my mother."

The antiquary of the present day is, however, a being of quite a different order. He is not necessarily aged, nor has he necessarily grey hairs, nor a dusty, parchment-like countenance, nor old-fashioned garments, nor dirty hands. He is not necessarily dull, forgetful, or abstracted. He does not necessarily spend his time in dark corners or spider-haunted chambers. Quite the contrary; he is a lively, active, sensible member of society, who looks at the past with the eye of a living criticism, brings the taste and love of true art to his studies of the bygone, and spends his time in some of the pleasantest nooks and corners of Old England,—not insensible to the charms of nature whilst peering after those of antiquity, and loving the company of friends of congenial tastes, whose society, says Mr. Thomas Wright, have ever given to his pleasant excursions in search of national antiquities an additional zest.

And who has been more assiduous in his studies of our national antiquities, and more zealous in rendering their study popular, or in making them more generally understood and appreciated?—who, in fact, has as yet given a more popular form to archæological truths relating to this country than Mr. Thomas Wright? as distinguished in science as he is felicitous in making it popular—the Laplace and Arago of archæology. "The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon," is a text-book of British antiquities unrivalled for perspicuity and clearness, and as remarkable for its rich fund of information as well as its just and sound criticism. The "Wanderings of an Antiquary" are the practical application of these views,—teaching each and every one how they may themselves become field or cabinet archæologists, and enrolled in the great body of

* Wanderings of an Antiquary; chiefly upon the Traces of the Romans in Britain. By Thomas Wright, Esq., M.A., F.S.A., &c. J, B. Nicholls and Sons.

contributors to a delightful branch of knowledge, and participators in a healthful, invigorating, and intellectual pursuit.

Let us wander for a moment with Mr. Wright in the old Forest of Dean; and he will show us curiosities and objects of interest where nothing but mysterious glades, enormous horse-flies, or hirsute robbers were legitimately to be expected. First, we have the Buckstone—a great national curiosity, and a supposed relic of Celtic antiquity, but which Mr. Wright shows to be one of a host; the Kymin, presenting numerous masses of the same stone, going through the process of being made, or rather disintegrated, into rocking-stones. Then there are large round pits or hollows in the earth, half hid by thick copses, which *sound* upon the intruder, or entrap the unwary into awkward falls. These are the remains of Roman iron mines, which have received the popular appellation of Scowls, or Scowles, and which abound throughout the whole neighbourhood. Sometimes these Scowles are on the mountain side,—as in the case of King Arthur's Hall, on the side of the Great Doward figured by Mr. Wright. At the sequestered village of Tretire is one of the most curious memorials of the Roman occupation of this district. It is a Roman altar, which has been since converted into a holy-water stoup. Mr. Wright takes great interest in these widely-spread remains of Roman industry—the ancient iron-works—and he returns to them *apropos* of Pevensey, the Weald, and Sussex antiquities.

Perhaps one of the most curious investigations here recorded is the opening of graves of the followers of Hengist and Horsa in the Isle of Thanet. One of the graves examined proved to be an extremely interesting one. It contained *three* skeletons, evidently those of a man, a woman, and a child of about thirteen or fourteen years of age. All three were laid on the floor of the grave, arm-in-arm, in a posture which could not but give an advantageous opinion of the domestic and affectionate character of our earliest Anglo-Saxon forefathers; the mother occupied the middle of the grave, with her husband to the right; and a large iron spear-head, in good preservation, literally separated their mouths. The skulls and much of the bones were tolerably well preserved; but some parts, and most of the articles of wood and iron, could only be traced by masses of black and dark-brown powder, into which they had been reduced by the process of decomposition. It would appear, says Mr. Wright, after describing the objects found in the grave, that these three bodies were interred at the same time; and imagination is left to seek a cause to account for their simultaneous death, which must have occurred in consequence of some epidemic disease, or by violence. Perhaps the whole family may have been murdered in their house, in some sudden piratical attack, to which dwellers on the coast were then constantly exposed; and when the invaders had been driven away, their friends had laid them thus in one grave.

A search for Roman pottery on the banks of the Medway was attended with an amount of amusing incident and mirthful adventure that some would imagine to be little consistent with learned research, to which, on the contrary, they serve to give a zest.

Altogether, this is a delightful little volume; very prettily got up, and profusely illustrated; carrying the reader from the Roman cities on the Welsh borders to ancient Verulamium, and from Rutupiæ and the Kentish and Sussex coasts to York and Goodmanham. There are also detailed and curious accounts of Bramber Castle and the early church-architecture of the neighbourhood, of the Roman villa at Bignor, of the Roman city of Isurium, of Old Sarum and Stonehenge, and of a host of other interesting relics of Old England.

A popular and practical work like this, amusing as well as instructive, and graceful as well as learned, is more calculated to diffuse a knowledge and to impart a taste for antiquarian pursuits, than a hundred folios of such as were published not many years ago.

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

XXXVII.

Many days were not elapsed after the scrivener's family had taken up their abode in the hut, before Dame Flamel became heartily weary of her sylvan retreat. Accustomed, during a long life, to the noise and animation of the town, there was something oppressive in the silence and solitude of the new world to which she was so suddenly transported.

Nicholas, too, began to sigh after his manuscripts and crucibles. Even his penmanship was remembered with regret—the romance of the Rose, long laid aside for visionary pursuits, appeared before his mind's eye in attractive colours. Roger attempted to interest him in the chase; but nothing could be more opposed to Nicholas's nature and habits than this pastime, which, by some collateral train of thought, he connected with the avocations of a butcher.

Perrelle alone seemed satisfied with her present mode of life. She won the forester's heart by the pleasure she found in his establishment, feeding his tame deer, which seemed to delight in eating wild chesnuts from her hand, caressing his dogs, and being useful, in many ways, to Dame Ursula his wife, who felt by no means disposed to quarrel with the chance that had conducted to her hut so accommodating and agreeable a companion.

But Dame Flamel's captiousness increased daily; and daily did Nicholas sigh more ardently for his manuscripts and his chimney-nook. The mother, although she had left her house empty of all temptation, had a constant vision of marauders pilfering her cupboards; and the son thought with anguish of the many precious moments that might be devoted to vital inquiry squandered away in the company of one whom he could regard in no other light but as a demi-savage. And both the one and the other, although when in town the intelligence that Notre Dame had disappeared over-night from the isle St. Louis would scarcely have elicited from them an exclamation, and the presence of an intruder, except in the way of business, was at all times irksome, complained of being debarred from news and the sight of a neighbour; and driven though they were from Paris by real danger, the depths of the forest began to impress them with imaginary insecurity.

But there was an anxiety which affected Nicholas more than all the rest. Roger, who, true to his word, had sought his cousin Margot in all the purlieus of Paris, could discover no trace of her. By Nicholas's direction he made inquiries at the convent of Maubuisson; but was informed that no such person as he described had applied for admission there. By no means discouraged, he continued his pursuit, but all to no purpose.

If, however, he was unsuccessful in his main object, he became the

occasional transmitter of town gossip to the great comfort of Dame Flamel, which she was obliged to admit, even though by this means deprived of one source of legitimate complaint.

One afternoon he came home with news of importance. His countenance was grave, but a radiance in his eye spoke of an eagerness to communicate even before he met Nicholas's interrogatory gaze. Had he, at last, discovered Margot? No! but the Templars were arrested, their fortress was occupied by the king's troops, and it was reported they were about to be tried for sorcery.

It is doubtful if anything within the range of probability could have given Dame Flamel more joy than this intelligence. Not only were her terrible enemies rendered harmless, but nothing now seemed to impede her return to her beloved chimney-nook. As to Nicholas, his feelings were of a mixed kind. If, by this sudden turn of fate, he need no longer dread Almeric's vengeance, was he not in some sort implicated in the crime of which the Templars were accused? True, he had cleared himself in the king's eyes, and had continued his relations with the knights at his express injunction, if Canches might be credited. Nor was he so blind as not to see in this event a deep policy, to the furtherance of which all charges whatsoever would be merely instrumental. Still he might be called upon to give evidence; and in so doing could he fail to commit himself before those judges who might not be disposed to take so favourable a view of his case as Philip had done? Canches, moreover, might be brought forward and confronted with him, and both thrown over by the king as tools no longer wanted. All things considered, he thought it better to prolong his residence at the hut, to watch the course of events; so that Dame Flamel encountered impediments to her projects in a quarter where certainly she never expected to find them.

Nicholas, therefore, without confiding his dilemma altogether to Roger, told him that he had reason to dread being, in some degree, implicated with the Templars, in consequence of certain documents he had drawn up under their instructions; and announced his intention of profiting by his assistance to conceal himself until he should be secure of impunity. It must be owned that Roger looked somewhat disconcerted at this communication. Not that he for a moment thought of withdrawing his protection from his relative, but to be mixed up, however remotely, with an affair which the king regarded as criminal, was no light thing. There was no help for it, however; but, resolved to ascertain without loss of time how far Nicholas's fears for himself were warranted, he strolled about the "street of the scriveners" to see if any measures were likely to be taken to apprehend him. He soon, indeed, discovered that the house had been searched, and continued to be watched by the menials of justice; and his mind being now made up as to the necessity of concealing his cousin and his family, he put a good face upon the matter, and returned to the hut to make arrangements for their prolonged residence within it.

The summer wore heavily away. Scarcely even a reflection of the gaieties in Paris during the royal fêtes found its way to the lonely hut. For Roger, despairing now of discovering Margot's retreat, went more rarely in search of her, and his few visits to the capital were more with the view to enliven his inmates with news than for any other motive. Though untiring in his hospitality, he could not but admit to himself that they added but little to the pleasantness of his domestic hearth; but

he was resolved that no effort of his own should be wanting to restore them to good humour.

Meanwhile everything remained quiet. The Templars were in prison, but seemed to be forgotten. Towards the close of autumn, however, an incident occurred which told Nicholas that this calm was only one of those deceitful lulls during which, in the affairs of men as in nature, the coming tempest is gathering strength.

It was on a raw November day. They were sitting round the forester's board, which was laden with the king's finest venison, a bright fire blazing in the hearth; but the party exhibited a less striking picture of social enjoyment than under the circumstances might have been expected. Roger in vain tried to infuse some portion of his merry spirits into his guests by dwelling at great length on his morning's sport. But Nicholas remained absorbed in his regret after manuscript and crucible—at being restricted to unsatisfactory theory after having revelled in all the excitement of experiment; and Dame Flamel, who had never before sat at so plentiful or dainty a board, kept mumbling something about the want of culinary accomplishments, which Ursula, the forester's pretty housewife, did not so completely overhear as might have been desired. Roger's oft-told tales of the chase had evidently no charm for the little party; and soon silence reigned among them, each yielding himself or herself up to the reflections suggested by their fancy.

Suddenly the silence was interrupted by a furious barking among the hounds. It was a sharp, short bark, and the practised ear of the forester at once told him that it announced not only the approach of a stranger, but one of suspicious or hostile appearance.

He rose hastily and looked out; but soon came back, saying it must have been some animal, for he could see no one, nor the trace of any one.

But the dogs would not be at rest; and after a short interruption renewed their warning.

"Decidedly some one must be prowling about," said the forester.

"Surely not after my son!" exclaimed the old woman, in alarm.

"I think not," said Roger; "since the vain search after him at the first throw off of this Templar affair there has been no hue-and-cry, as I well know. I think, dame, you may make yourself easy on that score. But the dogs will not cease—there must be some *routiers* or marauders about." And Raoul turned to leave the hut.

At that moment a faint cry escaped Pernelle, and she pointed towards the lattice, where the face of a man, or rather two piercing eyes, belonging evidently to a human face, were anxiously peering into the room. Having attracted general attention, the stranger hesitated no longer; but moving round to the door, closely followed by two other male figures, slowly entered the hut.

These men, who from their number, though it was but small, would, if their appearance had been warlike, have sufficed to inspire terror in the little family which they so unexpectedly intruded upon, bore at least, outwardly, something reassuring. The foremost was clad like a palmer; the two others wore the garb of mendicant monks. Their pale and haggard countenances and emaciated persons testified to long privation and much travail—their limbs looked worn, and their hearts seemed heavy.

One glance at them dispelled all suspicion from Roger's mind,

awakened Pernelle's ready sympathy, and left the other tenants of the hut in apparent indifference. But at the very first sound of their voices Flamel started, and evinced the liveliest terror. Screening his person as much as possible from observation by shrinking behind his mother, he awaited with breathless interest the development of a scene that had so little promise. And yet the words spoken by the strangers were not of a nature to create alarm. They were simply an appeal to charity, of which they stood so much in need. Nicholas, however, recognised those accents heard in the most eventful hour of his existence. Disguise might conceal the persons only once beheld in a moment of wild excitement; but the voice was engraven on his memory. The slight bent figure of the palmer, too, and his keen grey eyes, did not seem unknown to him; and he shrunk even more carefully than before behind the protecting form and distaff of his aged parent.

"And so, good fathers, you are wanderers to Holy Land?" said the forester.

"Not so far, my son," replied the foremost of the little group. "Only to St. Mary's of Lorretto, in Italy."

"True—Holy Land is not so secure now as it used to be when we had good Christian knights to defend devout pilgrims like yourselves, reverend fathers; and the road to heaven is pleasanter to the wanderer's feet along the rich provinces of our own dear France than over the burning sands of Asia."

"And yet," said the calm, agreeably-toned voice of the palmer, "one may suffer from hunger and thirst in this same rich France of ours, as I and my companions know to our cost."

"Well, good fathers, if you are hungry here's venison enough, I doubt not, to comfort and sustain you; and as to thirst," said Roger, casting his eye on the empty flagon, "why we'll provide for that, too." And going to a recess in the wall he produced a leather bottle, and poured therefrom some wine into the flagon.

The pilgrims, without more words, took their seats at the table, and devoured their fare with a voracity that was painful to behold, and which said more clearly than words could have done how great was their need of this generous succour. Ursula had enough to do with replenishing their ever empty dishes; and Roger re-filled the flagon with assiduity. During their repast the strangers observed absolute silence. Indeed, their powers of mastication required uninterrupted play. More than once Roger and Ursula were on the point of warning them against the danger of devouring so rapidly; but an innate good breeding made them feel that the advice, though kindly meant, might be misunderstood, and they thought it more consistent with their dignity as hosts to minister silently to their wants and repress all outward exhibition of amazement at their magnitude. But Dame Flamel, who had no such sentiments to restrain her, frequently crossed herself, muttering, as she did so:

"God shield us from the pangs of hunger and the sin of gluttony!"

Not until they had said grace in good Latin over the meal they had done such ample justice to, and thanked, in short but warm expressions, those who had helped them to it, did Roger or his wife trouble them with questions. Now that they might be supposed to have in some degree recruited their strength, however, Roger ventured to ask them what news they brought from Paris.

"But little," replied the palmer, who seemed to be constituted chief spokesman of the party.

"The town must be still occupied with this pendant affair of the Templars, though all seemed so hushed?" pursued Roger; his aim being to gather as many details as he could on that subject to relieve his cousin's anxiety: but the strangers knew, or appeared to know, nothing about the matter.

The hour was at hand when Roger usually went out to join the chief ranger; and yet he felt reluctant to leave the hut in the possession of men who might, after all, be styled vagrants, and the females to the protection of one of whose practical abilities he thought so meanly as he did of poor Flamel's. Yet he liked not to turn away weary pilgrims from his door, and deny them the rest which they seemed no less to need than the refreshments they had just partaken of. Eyeing, therefore, his guests with a glance not wholly devoid of meaning, he began to busy himself with cross-bow and bolts, brightening up his hunting-horn, calling his dogs, and giving sundry other professional indications of his being about to depart on his forest duties. This manœuvre seemed by no means to affect the pilgrims. They either did not, or would not, comprehend his impatience to see them move off. In vain did Ursula second her husband's obvious desire by busying herself, with the help of Pernelle, in removing from the table the remnants of good cheer, Dame Flamel remaining the whilst at her spinning-wheel, behind which poor Nicholas continued to cower, his face buried in his hands, still indulging the hope of thus escaping notice. But his very efforts to avoid it drew it upon him.

"Brother, see you that youth so carefully evading our scrutiny?" whispered one of the strangers in the ear of the palmer—"he must know us!"

"I think not, reverend brother," was the answer; "from his dress I take him to be one of the forester's helps." In fact, Nicholas, by way of change of raiment, wore some of Roger's cast-off clothes.

"I am not easy in my mind about him," resumed the first speaker; "why screens he his person so carefully?"

"He may be weary and sleepy," observed the third, who had not before spoken. "I do not think we are in his mind—but now, good brother, that, by God's mercy, we are come thus far, can you in your wisdom point out how it behoves us to proceed?"

"Our escape was so sudden—so miraculous—so dream-like—that I have had neither time or coolness to form a plan; but if these good people will allow us to rest here awhile, I doubt not of being able to devise some feasible scheme for the future. I think we might hold conference in Latin in their presence without chance of being understood by them—but we must prepare the way." And turning to Roger, the palmer addressed him in meek, almost humble accents:

"With your good leave, my son, before resuming the wanderer's staff, we would indulge in some pious exercises, according to our custom, after partaking of creature comforts."

"I can make no objection to anything so reasonable," answered Roger, secretly deeming the said exercises to be a mere pretence in order to linger another half hour or so before his blazing hearth.

Without losing more time, the pilgrim, in as monotonous and nasal a

tone as he could assume, proceeded to develop rapidly in Latin his notions to his companions.

"We shall not want hospitality by the way," he said; "but we must quit the woods as little as may be, and endeavour to keep our track due north. Once in the good county of Boulogne, we shall lack neither friends or succour, nor open defence, if it be necessary. All I pray for —all I wish is to reach that blessed land in safety. Thence the sea is open to us; and we can seek shores less hostile than these have proved. What say you, brothers?"

"Only this," exclaimed one of the pilgrims, rather more warmly than caution justified, "that with Peter of Boulogne, our grand procurator, the last stay and prop of our Order is withdrawn from it. It is like tearing from the tempest-tossed ship its sheet-anchor."

"Pshaw! Raynald," answered Peter of Boulogne, with a contrite look upwards—a pantomimic *finesse* to lay the awakened curiosity of his host. "What could so frail an anchor do in such an overwhelming storm! It were carried away with the good ship! No; before taking so desperate a step I considered all things. What mortal man could do in my clerical capacity I have essayed. You know how abortive were my endeavours. Nothing can save us. It is not indeed the question of our guilt which has brought us to this pass, therefore to prove our innocence were mere drivelling. No; the only chance we have of clearing our Order—of preserving its traditions in honour among men—is in our return to the world,—not performing penance in a monk's cell, but mingling with the busy, stirring world, and leaving to posterity an undying record of our sufferings and our wrongs. We must not let our enemies alone tell the tale. For this would I live—for this did I fly. One day, perhaps, our Order may bloom afresh: but for the time being, and in this country, believe me, it is lost! If, on account of the holy character with which we are invested, means of escape have been afforded us in which no lay brother, be his rank never so exalted, will be allowed to participate, such exemption has confirmed my preconceived views of our real position. The malice of our enemies is well known to me."

"You are right, reverend brother; we had not escaped but for our belonging to Holy Church, or how was it that all the clericals were distributed in houses of little note and but ill-guarded. When your request to plead the cause of the Templars was granted——"

"Hush!" Peter of Boulogne hastily exclaimed. "Our host appears to suspect the sanctity of our orations;" and exchanging his conversational tone for one of grave monotony, he broke out into what seemed a fervent prayer for succour and enlightenment from above, with which his companions chimed in.

The females silently joined their own pious invocations to the supposed holy exercises of the strangers, when a horn, sounding at no great distance, suddenly interrupted them. The pilgrims started to their feet, and seized their staffs—then let them fall with looks of dismay. The dogs struck up a merry chorus; and a shade of impatience crossed Roger's good-humoured countenance as, snatching up his cross-bow, he prepared to leave the hut.

"Come, good fathers," he said, "I will not be hard upon you—that's the head forester's call—I must away; but you may remain in the hut and rest yourselves if you please, and even share the evening meal with

us an you'll wait so long. And," added he, with his usual recklessness, "you will not lack conversation, for yonder sits one who can talk Latin as well as yourselves, and join you in your orations as well as a clerk."

Roger saw not, or did not understand the agonised look of Nicholas; for with these words he left the hut, and his rapid footsteps were soon lost in the distance.

Peter of Boulogne, calmly turning to the place where the scrivener sat, said, in accents of mild authority:

"Come forth, my son; let me read in your countenance what we have to fear or to hope."

"To fear—nothing, good father," said Flamel, removing his hands from his face, whose pallor sufficiently betrayed his emotion.

"Ha! whom have we here? I am greatly mistaken or I have seen that face before. I now remember—it was in that stupid affair—I have it all now."

"I am sure," said Dame Flamel, interposing, "be you who you may, you have never known my son do anything that he need blush for. Flamel the scrivener——"

"That's it!" exclaimed Peter of Boulogne. "Nicholas Flamel the scrivener—I remembered the face—the occurrence—but the name had escaped me. Leave us, good woman," continued Peter of Boulogne, authoritatively. "Young man, we must have speech of you alone; for what we have to say imports you no less to hear than ourselves to communicate."

"I am his mother," said Dame Flamel; "yonder is his wife; and this is the kindly woman to whose hospitality you, as well as ourselves, are so deeply indebted."

Pernelle's eyes as usual sought her husband's countenance as the rule by which to conduct herself: she thought she read there a mingled desire for, and terror of, the threatened explanation.

"Let these women withdraw," said one of the pilgrims, impatiently, and we will relieve the doubts which I see assail you."

"And which, I think," stammered Nicholas, with but ill-assumed audacity, "are well warranted, if my impressions are not at fault with regard to those who——"

"Whatever errors we may have committed, young man, have been amply atoned for," said Peter of Boulogne, with a sad emphasis; "nor should you allow your resentment, however deeply rooted it may be, to survive so great a calamity. That which we would confide to you concerns you nearly; nor will you be sorry that it meet no other ear but your own."

After a short mental struggle, which was visible to the least observant eye, Nicholas urged the women to conform to the stranger's wishes. Pernelle set the example of obedience, promptly leaving the hut, closely followed by Ursula, Dame Flamel bringing up the rear, muttering sundry audible expressions of discontent.

When they had closed the door, Peter of Boulogne, fixing his scrutinising eye on the scrivener, said:

"Are you aware, young man, that there has been a warrant out against you for several months past?"

"Something of this I have heard," faltered Nicholas, with a cheek paler than before.

"That your house has been searched several times—that all your neighbours have been interrogated, and that spies are posted near your dwelling to intercept you or any one you might send there?—that, in short, every precaution has been taken to get possession of your person, in order to produce you as a witness against the Templars? The Jew Canches has also been sought, but hitherto without success."

"Ay," said Nicholas, with some of his mother's acerbity, "it is a right meed for those who, like him and me, have blindly fluttered round a devouring flame! Forced to fly you in your prosperity—enveloped in your disgrace—crushed by your fall, what now is to become of me? God wot, I have no secret treasures on which to sustain my wretched existence and that of my family! We have been living here for months upon the charity of one on whom we have little or no claim—miserable outcasts that we are! deprived even of the power to earn our own bread! But this charity we cannot encroach upon for ever. I shall soon be driven back to town—to prison—perhaps to death, by very want."

"Or to add one more to our accusers—to gratify the malignity of our enemies without—rest assured of that, young man—without escaping the penalty you speak of. For think not that you can own with impunity to participation, even on compulsion, as you would doubtless plead, in such acts as those which some of our brethren are charged with. Now listen to good counsel," continued Peter of Boulogne. "We are in reality poorer than those for the most part are whose humble garb we have assumed—and rightly assumed." A deep sigh escaped him. "We are, indeed, very beggars!—beggared in fame—in wealth—in hope! But the charitable souls who abetted our flight bestowed upon us some gold. Far better will it be employed in shielding our unhappy brothers from the evidence of so formidable a witness as you might prove in the hands of our enemies than in ensuring our own escape. Here—take it," and he drew from beneath his vest a heavy leather pouch.

"But bethink you, reverend brother—this is our all—our only chance—a gift bestowed for the love of Holy Mother Church, whose humble servants we are."

"We'll beg—we'll starve, if need be, but this youth must not be compelled by want to appear against us. Nay, young man, do not defend yourself. Your intentions, I doubt not, are good—I read them in your ingenuous countenance; but this trial may last too long for human endurance. Accept, without shame, what I now offer; and when it is exhausted—for I foresee that it will be long before you can, with safety, return to your professional avocations in Paris—remove to the town of Bethune, present yourself to the reigning count, or to the Bishop of Arras, and claim their protection in the name of Peter of Boulogne, the Grand Procurator of the Temple, and assuredly it will be granted to you. There," said the old man, removing the broad-brimmed pilgrim's hat from his head—"look well at my features, that you may describe me should it become necessary to convince them of your veracity. Look well at me, young man—fix my features on your remembrance, and that poor recollection may, perchance, befriend you."

"Oh! brother, where is your wonted prudence in thus exposing your person and secrets to this craven-spirited burgher youth?"

"He may not have the courage of arms, for which he was not born, nor has been trained; but that thoughtful brow speaks of no vulgar

spirit; and were I even mistaken in my estimation of his character, the interest of the Order must silence every other. I would not fall an useless sacrifice; but for the good of the Temple I am ready to do and suffer all things. Now you know us and our purposes, young man, tell me if you will consent to what I require, and if it is in your power to procure us a safe guide through this forest, and some provisions for the road?"

Harden himself as he would against those who had overthrown his existence, Nicholas was touched with this aged man's self-abnegation. He assured him that it was his most ardent desire to escape being brought forward on the trial of those whose enemies would be able to employ but too many willing tools against them; and Peter of Boulogne had studied the human countenance too well not to read sincerity in Flamel's eyes. As to a guide and provisions, Nicholas said he would mention the subject to Roger when he returned.

"This youth being a friend of Montfaucon and others of that wild league, should know something of that strange deposit which has been so much talked of among our captive brothers," said one of the Templars, thoughtfully.

"What avails it?" replied Peter of Boulogne. "Not the whole of our treasures so lawlessly seized could profit us in this extremity."

"If Montfaucon has really disposed of so large a portion of them as is said, he must have had associates out of the Temple. This youth may not be in such need of that sack of gold as he would pretend. Come, young man,—know you nought of a certain treasure which some of our reckless and false-hearted brothers managed to remove from the Temple shortly before the catastrophe that overthrew it?"

"No," answered Flamel, carelessly; "if such things were done, I was not the chosen confidant."

"I repeat," observed Peter of Boulogne, "the question is, at least for the present, immaterial."

"The discovery might afford us the means of purchasing the good-will of gaolers—corrupting guards—the strongest sword will break like straw before that mighty weapon gold."

"If those dishonoured reprobates have chosen an ally among the town-folks," said Peter of Boulogne, with a disdain he did not choose to veil, "depend upon it he will have been a vile Jew—an usurer—not a Christian clerk and a scholar."

"There you are right, reverend father," said Flamel. "I know no more of the Temple secrets than what you are already aware of, and, God wot, the burden is heavy enough."

The women were now called in, and the conversation ceased; the pilgrims as well as Nicholas being plunged in profound reflection, from which the occasional querulous remarks of Dame Flamel, and the inquiries of the younger females, did not rouse them. Roger returned earlier than usual with a good supply of game. He found his new guests dozing away the time, as he thought, till supper, of which they partook with little less relish than they had done the morning meal.

At Flamel's request, Roger then undertook to guide them through the forest; and with a fair provision for the road they set out under his escort, having declined his invitation to pass the night at the hut—for his opinion of the strangers had greatly risen on finding so good an under-

standing established between them and Nicholas. A brisk walk of a few hours brought the party to a ford on the Seine, which Roger had undertaken to make them cross dry-foot, let them reach it when they would.

He performed his promise—the ferryman being a particular friend of his own—without venturing a single question; though he wondered in his heart what could make such holy men take the road by moonlight like routiers, poachers, and such like vermin, in preference to the blessed light of the sun, which, however pale in November, he thought more pleasant than the moon.

And thus was all Nicholas's incertitude at once put an end to. He was not forgotten—as of late he had begun to hope—and he now knew the precise nature of his danger. Fortunately the means of ensuring his kind host's continued hospitality were now his; and however much he grieved over his enforced inaction, he saw plainly that there was nothing for it but patiently to spend the winter at the hut, where sheltered alike from friend and foe—for in his intricate situation he could scarcely distinguish the one from the other—he would abide the issue of the trial.

WHAT IS FAME?

BY MARY C. F. MONCK.

A SPIRIT with bright star-strown wings,
That, as we near it, ever flies;
The prize for which the poet sings,
The meed for which the warrior dies;
The mirage in the desert sand
That lures the fainting trav'ller on:—
He stretches forth his eager hand,
And lo! the flowing stream is gone.

The eager dream, the longing thirst
Of many a proud and noble heart;
The flatt'ring hope, in silence nurst,
Once cherished, but with life to part;
A false bright beacon on a rock,
Where many a gallant bark is cast:—
They hear the roar, they feel the shock,
Yet blindly trust it to the last.

The fabled golden fruit that grew,
By fiery dragons fenced around;
A flow'r of fair and gorgeous hue,
Guarded with thorns that pierce and wound;
A peaceful haven far away
Beyond a troubled ocean's wrath,
A treasure open to the day,
With angry lions in the path;

A rabble shout, an idle breath,
That faints upon the empty air;
A tardy boon, delayed, till death
Hath ended hope and stilled despair;
A laurel for the lowly grave,
Where heart and brain lie cold and still;
Too late to succour or to save
From hopes deferred, that blight and kill.

QUERY.

BY BASIL MAY.

I'm an author—I don't say it as a boast; not at all; I wish you to suppose a precarious existence for your humble servant. Yes, sir, I am one of those estimable beings who from elevated dwellings condescend to enlighten you through the pages of our periodical publications. But would you believe it, it was only last night that that low plebeian singing fellow Thoroughbase had the effrontery to insinuate I had no position in society. I could have proved to him literally, had I been so minded, that I occupy a very exalted position; and for the honour of letters, I fired up, for my Muse, though she be a gentle and a meek, has an innate consciousness of the dignity of her "cloth," and can ride Pegasus in a good cause. Still, as I reflected, I could not but be painfully alive to the erratic mode of my occupation, and asked myself the question—"Was I ever intended by nature for an author?" Prudence, no doubt, had whispered to my father—"Teach that boy a trade," for the study of medicine became my profession. Fate would have it otherwise; no amount of discipline could overcome my vagabond instincts. I never could knuckle down to routine; impulse has always been the governing principle from which my actions spring. If I was not in the humour, and my life depended on it, I could no more sit down and write a note to decline an invitation to dinner, than fly. There is this to be said, that particular case very seldom occurs; and here I sit, the late admired contributor of the *Popgun Miscellany* and the *Frill Herald*, with not so much as a single shot in the locker, and scarcely a reserve collar for solemn occasions.

Not to enter into the particulars of the beginning of a literary life, I will merely state that to accident merely is to be attributed my present unavoidable position. One day that returning from a long walk in the Kensington Gardens, taken with a view to indulge in philosophical reflections tending to create in me a determination to pursue some decided and positive course, I found a note lying on my table. It was from Cash, the tobacconist, and ran as follows:

"Dear Peacock,

"Do you call to-morrow morning, at nine o'clock, upon Vefervesce, the popular novelist. Applied to me; said he wanted some one to copy his MSS.; recommended you—all right, my boy—six hours a day, one guinea a week. Step in, and let us know the result.

"Yours ever,

"Cash."

To say that I was mightily pleased by this intelligence, or that I cut capers about my room to the peril of my jug and basin, and of the china mandarin and other familiar gods with which it had pleased my landlady to decorate my mantelshelf, would be to speak beyond the mark, and state that which is not strictly correct; but visions of a regular course of future dinners, to which I had been somewhat a stranger of late, were

not without their charm, and served to compensate in a great measure for the rather prosaic pursuit in which I might soon find myself engaged.

True to my time, the next morning found me waiting upon Mr. Vefervesce, the popular and graphic pen. That gentleman, whose occupations were of the multifarious kind, had already gone out, but he had left me his instructions in a twisted note, which, together with some folded papers that were lying on a table, was pointed out to me by the servant as she ushered me into the study. For a whole week I settled down to the condition of a piece of machinery, performing my task with clock-work regularity, without having once during that time had the honour of a moment's interview with my considerate employer. Was it that Cash had divulged a carefully hidden secret, and confidently disclosed my latent genius to this great man, who, making all allowances for a commendable pride and reasonable susceptibility, feared to wound my feelings by a direct communication upon so antipathetic and commonplace a subject as that of transcription? Or was it that the celebrated Vefervesce eschewed contact with the humble Peacock? At this remote period, now that time has mellowed the train of my reflections, I am inclined to think that I was not the first hidden genius with whom he might have had dealings, and perhaps the remembrance of some sharp infliction induced him in this instance to fight shy of a possible, if not a probable, recurrence of the mishap. But, sir, I was not such a tyro as to let slip this splendid opportunity of bringing to the notice of so great a man my charming compositions. "Who can tell," thought I to myself, "although I have gone the round of the London publishers—who knows but that it is a lucky fate which throws me in the path of the admired and popular Vefervesce? It isn't the first time that good has come of such an incident. Isn't there Goldsmith and Dr. Johnson?" My determination was soon taken. I had a pet paper: ah! madam, how sweet is the recollection thereof. I had imagined it, and pondered it, and repondered it, and cut and added to it, and added and cut from it, it would have done Boileau's heart good to have seen me. It bore a delectable title—"A single heart for a couple of loves." Its merits I won't attempt to analyse—not here, at all events. You shall have the benefit of its perusal some day. I have reserved it as a crowning effort to my efforts in the flowery but uneven path of serial literature, previous to my definitively setting up a panorama of St. Giles's-hill and the river Hitchen. That paper I left one day, as if by accident, on the table at which I had been working. The next morning I was met by Vefervesce on the stairs; the great man had actually come forth himself to do me the honours of his chairs and carpet. Sir, I am not a tall man, but had you on that occasion ventured to call my attention to the fact that there was a ceiling and roof above my head, between myself and the sky, most decidedly I should have denied your assertion.

"You left a paper on the table last night," said he; "I perceived it was in your handwriting. Pray are you the author?"

I bowed a modest acknowledgment, and was about to apologise for my wilful forgetfulness, but he cut me short with a "Bless me! but such abilities must not remain hidden. 'Tis a delightful performance. You must have composed much previously?"

I said I had written some philosophical essays which had never been published, but feared their perusal would destroy the flattering opinion he had kindly expressed of my abilities.

"Tut, tut, man; let me see them. If they are at all up to the mark, I'll give you a recommendation to Beak, my publisher."

You may be sure I was not slow to act up to the very letter of this proposition. The next morning you might have seen me a full half-hour before my time kicking my heels about, on the rack of expectation, in the vicinity of Baker-street, down one of whose turnings, a few paces off, stood Vefervesce's domicile. Punctually as the clock struck ten my hand was at the bell, which I pulled with mingled feelings of anticipated success and doubtfulness. Five minutes later I was seated in the study facing Vefervesce, who, dressed in a splendid brocaded morning gown, with his legs stretched and crossed, was attentively diving into the MS. I had handed to him.

"Good, very good," he ejaculated, drawling out the words. Then turning over some pages rapidly: "Ah! ah!" he tittered, after a pause, "original idea this, very—ah, ah!" (Reading) "'A man's head and heels may be said to be the north and south of his anatomy, and the spirit within may be compared to the moon's rays, which as they lighten up one region leave the other in darkness—*i. e.* mind and matter the two antagonistic principles of our being.' Bravo! Cato never said better. 'Tis infinitely beyond Carlyle. My young friend, we must see you *fairly adrift* on the sea of letters, of which I think I may safely predict you will prove one of the brightest ornaments."

I have underlined the words "fairly adrift" that you, sir, may understand that that was the Delphian formula which ruled my future destiny.

"There, that's for Beak," he continued, handing me a note which he hastily wrote. "Come and pick me up on Thursday evening at eight o'clock; *conversazione* at Lady Topet's. Think of introducing you to some literary friends. Not a word of thanks. Good-day, not later than eight, mind, Thursday evening."

Thus considerately dismissed, as I stood in the street I found that in my confusion I had put my hat on back-foremost—a fashion I never could endure, from the seam of the leather lining pressing against my forehead. I was so particular in the avoidance of this, that nothing short of a most portentous circumstance could possibly have led me to overlook the regular habit I had of always wearing my hat one way. It was a bad sign, and to this day I have looked upon the occurrence as an ill omen. Vefervesce, who I am more than half inclined to suspect was an interested party in the firm of Beak and Co.,—Vefervesce's note went home—no pun intended. Beak was all smiles and condescension—bowed me into his parlour, and to a seat—inquired of me if I had thought at all as to what would be a fair agreement between us, and upon my answering in the negative, and expressing my desire to hear his proposals, offered me an advance of 20*l.* down and an equal share in the profits; all risks of publication to be taken upon himself. Matters being thus satisfactorily settled, I pocketed his cheque upon the bank, and as providentially it still wanted five-and-twenty minutes to five, I hailed a Hansom, and promising the driver a "go" in addition to his fare, to drive like the wind, jumped into it, threw myself back in the seat,

stretched out my legs, folded my arms on my chest, and indulged in all the speculative delights of a first successful literary "throw."

Had I, sir, concurrently with these events, met Plivy, I should have triumphed over him by parading my success in his very face; for could I for an instant reasonably banish from my mind the sort of humiliation I had experienced from his pitying expressions, when he discovered that I had unalterably cast aside the sharp-pointed lancet for the still sharper-pointed and more noble quill? Plivy, sir—Plivy, who has grown fat upon self-complacency and the mechanic performance of the duties of a plodding life—Plivy the serene—Plivy the pliant—Plivy the calculating—Plivy, faugh! who has no soul above a pill-box! I am miles beyond Plivy, sir, in a spiritual and moral sense. My soul expands to the promptings of an intellect whose aspirations assimilate my being to a state of perfect poetical bliss. I dwell with delight in the realms of fancy, and soaring high above the range of material influences, I cast my anchor in fields of unexplored gems of thought and philosophical treasures. I am slight and pale, bald at the temples, with a half-sickly, half-deceptive look, which is so characteristic of genius feeding on ideality. Plivy is empty-minded, placid, full, and growing toned. Plivy finds companionship—I provoke attention. Need I say more?

As soon as I had got my cheque cashed I called upon Strip, the tailor, and ordered a dress suit. I was very particular in recommending him to put watered-silk facings to the coat, and insisted upon the necessity of the trousers fitting close to the boot. I think I also intimated it was desirable I should not feel pinched in it at the chest, and that I could wear my trousers without braces if they were made to sit well upon the hips. These little items settled, and having done something in the linen line, I adjourned to a comfortable tavern in the neighbourhood of the Haymarket, and ordered dinner, which I should much like you, sir, to have done me the honour to partake of, were it only that there might be one living person to bear witness to my *goût recherché* in the matter. I believe I went somewhere after dinner, but I can certify, without fear of contradiction, that I found myself in my own bed the next morning.

It was twelve o'clock before I awoke, and I had to collect my thoughts to feel convinced that I had not merely dreamt all that had happened to me. And as my thoughts recurred, I remembered also what had been the treatment I had received from my landlady, Mrs. Grindstone, since an unsparing Providence had established us in the relative positions of debtor and creditor. Your discrimination and experience will have told you who was the debtor and who the creditor. I had been subjected to all kinds of little annoyances of late; such as finding the door barred when I returned home at silent hours of the night. I had previously informed her, that being theatrical critic to the *Frill Herald*, my duties would keep me out late; and, moreover, that having been engaged by the "Society for the further Development of the Attachment of Domestic Animals," to prepare an essay on cats, I had chosen the silent hours of the night as better suited to a just appreciation of their peculiar idiosyncrasy. I believe Mrs. Grindstone was fully prepared to admit the theatrical critic, and might, as a consequence, have pinned her faith to the essay on the idiosyncrasy of cats, but failing a single order for the theatres, which she had repeatedly insinuated would be welcome to

her daughter Angelina, she had begun to doubt my individuality—a doubt entertained also much to the prejudice of the aforesaid society. To this, then, as well as to my inherent disinclination to enter into matters which I have always been disposed to ignore, such as money matters for instance, may be attributed the Grindstone drolleries I had to endure. At one time I was compelled to go to bed in the dark, from not being able to put my hand on the matches; then there was no blacking in the house, and I had to walk out in dirty shoes; or the milkman hadn't been, and I had to go without my breakfast; or as I went through the passage I could hear myself spoken of, by Miss Angelina from the parlour, as "that penny-a-liner feller;" and apostrophised by Mrs. Grindstone shrieking out: "Now mind, Peacock, no later than twelve, or you shan't get in." But I held up my head, sir, and muttered "*Canaille!*" "Thank heaven," I said to myself, "it isn't everybody can understand French."

As these matters, sir, passed in rapid succession through my brain, and my eyes rested on the small heap of sovereigns I had placed on the dressing-table, I experienced something of the brute feeling entertained by a savage who, living upon roots and raw buffalo hide, after days and nights spent in pursuit of a mortal enemy, suddenly overtakes him, binds him to a tree, and subjects him to those dexterous tomahawk performances of which we lately had a Chinese adaptation at Drury Lane Theatre. I was bent upon a telling, pointed, and calculating retaliation. Miss Angelina, according to habit, was thumping away at the piano. I rang the bell.

"Did you ring?" presently inquired a shrill voice, which I recognised as belonging to the "slavey" of the establishment.

"Yes!" I shouted; "come in."

"Missus says as how I ain't to go into the gentlemen as isn't up."

"Very well. Go down and make my compliments to Miss Angelina, and ask her to stop that strumming. I've a headache."

There was a pause, followed by, "Crikey, my eye, here's a go!" and I heard the slut tumbling down stairs with all the gambolical velocity she might have displayed had she undertaken to play pantaloon that evening.

"Now for it," said I to myself; and very soon afterwards I heard Mrs. Grindstone's heavy footstep upon the stairs. Dashing open the door, she entered my chamber, showing a fleshy, formidable front, with her arms akimbo. Subsiding into a theatrical posture, with her head thrown a little on one side, and assuming a melodramatic tone of voice:

"How dare yer, yer imperdent feller, send down such a inserlent message to my 'Gelina?" she exclaimed.

I sat on the edge of the bed, with my great coat on as a morning-gown. I had slipped my feet into a pair of old shoes with the backs bent down, and I retained my nightcap, as imparting a peculiar dignity to my personal appearance.

"Mrs. Grindstone, ma'am," said I, in answer to her apostrophe, "I shall feel much obliged if, for the future, you will kindly rap at my door previous to honouring me with your presence." I had taken up my meerschaum whilst I spoke, and began to fill it. My coolness infuriated her.

"Yer good-for-nothing vagerbond feller that I've fed and washed,"

she shrieked, "make haste and get yer rags on, and pack out of my house. Yer villain! yer scoundrel! 'Gelina, my dear, 'Gelina!" she shouted from the top of the stairs, "tell Betsy to bring up the pail of house-water; we'll wash some of the imperdence out of him before he leaves the house." And returning to the charge, she overwhelmed me with such a shower of scurrility and abuse as must have proved the queen-flower of the peculiar rhetorical jargon-bouquet of Billingsgate. I allowed her to exhaust her vocabulary of invective, taking advantage of a pause to recommend her taking it more coolly, informing her at the same time that I could not possibly permit her rehearsing for the play in my room; that any little advice I could give her I should be most happy to give gratuitously, but at another time and in another place; and ended by requesting she would allow me to enjoy my own undisturbed company, as I wanted to make out a list of things I had to purchase previously to sailing for the "diggings." This said, I took up, as if quite carelessly, my handkerchief from off the table. I had previously covered over the sovereigns with it, which were now exposed to view. At the sight of the gold her anger vanished like smoke, and her mellifluent qualities rose in proportion.

"Oh dear, dear me, Mr. Peacock, why will yer persist in pervoking me?"

"Madam," I answered, with all my inborn dignity, "let me have my account this moment; in another hour I leave your house."

Seeing my determination not to be conciliated:

"Go, if yer like," she rejoined. "As to yer account, yer could have had it long ago, I dare say. Put a beggar on horseback, and he'll ride——"

I didn't wait to hear the end of the sentence, for as she stood on the threshold of the door, I assisted her out by the shoulder, and slammed the door against her.

My preparations were soon made, and before many hours had elapsed I found myself comfortably settled in a neat, pleasant little lodging in the neighbourhood of Hyde Park.

By four o'clock on the following Thursday my new clothes were at my new lodgings; and by five, my hair curled and scented, and whiskers, item No. 1, ditto, I stood in my new clothes at the corner of the street, waiting, bent upon dinner, for the first unengaged Hansom which should happen to pass. Towards half-past seven I started anew to keep my appointment with Vefervesce. Found him ready.

"How do, how do?" he exclaimed; "punctuality fine thing. Sent for a cab; be here in an instant. Meet Brinley Pickle, great satirist, at Lady Topet's; and Professor Embroglio—profound thinker; also Dun Gun Dumladen, the shepherd-poet. Cab's here, I see; let's off."

During our ride I gave him an account of my interview with Beak, told him how the matter had been settled, and received from himself in return some particulars of the persons I was about to meet; which were not without their importance, for, as I entered Lady Topet's drawing-room, I recognised her ladyship at a glance, could have laid my finger on the professor, and sworn to the shepherd-poet. My patron, who since our last interview had met her ladyship in company, had spoken of and asked permission to introduce me, preparing the way to a kind reception by saying some flattering things in my favour. Her ladyship had

named me to Brinley Pickle, who had chosen an opportunity of repeating in Professor Embroglio's hearing that I was the author of a profound scientific treatise, which was destined to eclipse many noted, but usurped, reputations, and add renewed lustre to that particular branch of art. Embroglio had dropped a note to Beak to request that he would forward him the earliest copy which should issue from the press; and another to Herr Shavental, his bosom friend, and literary critic to the *Blunderbuss*, to keep an eye on the said performance. My Lady Topet received me graciously, and, seeing that in my modesty I had retired to an unobtrusive corner, benignantly condescended to enlighten the region with her presence, and, to use the back-parlour vernacular, tried "to draw me out." I did my best to satisfy her curiosity. I was also subjected to the infliction of some spiteful favourite common-places aimed at the company generally by the biting Brinley Pickle. The professor attempted to lead me into a discussion on the practicability of the suction principle, as applied to the pumping-up of electricity; and the shepherd-poet sought to charm me with the details of a projected pastoral, which should bear the euphonius title of "The Tipple o'Wink in the Tom and Jerry." Altogether, there was very little common sense spoken, and a good deal of weak, sickly-looking negus drunk, and whether it was that my studied reservedness acting in strong contrast with the general noise predisposed her ladyship in my favour, or whether her naturally good disposition prompted her to oblige and assist others, I cannot exactly say, but I must admit it was with considerable pleasure I accepted her offer to introduce me at Lady Gumshun's *soirée* the following night, to whom, if she could be prevailed upon to permit of my dedicating my forthcoming work, I might attribute the certain sale of some extra hundred copies. I went to Lady Gumshun's *soirée*, and I have anything but reason to complain of the effects it produced. Her ladyship stood godmother to my work, which appeared shortly, and, recommended as it was, sold rapidly, and filled my pocket. I was now fairly launched in fashionable society, and my patron, who was indirectly flattered by the kindly notice I and my *bear* received from the public and the press, took every opportunity of introducing me to new friends, at whose houses I was always welcome.

I had removed into elegant chambers in St. James's, and was leading a life of heedless gaiety upon the profits of my work, which, having obtained a genuine *succès de circonstance*, might be considered as one of those winning tickets in the lottery of life which seldom or ever turn up trumps a second time. But there must be an end to everything, even to the sale of a successful book; and this I found out to my cost, when the fourth edition still remained unexhausted on my publisher's shelves. Unfortunately, my expenses still ran on, and I felt the necessity of doing something to keep up the style I was living at. Set to work again I must, and I can conscientiously say that I sat down fully bent upon doing so. But, sir, where had fled the inspiration which previously was so obedient to my call? where the energy which had incited me to an effort beyond my natural strength? Alas! sir, I found that I could no more command matter for a book which should be fit to read than I could bend my restless and impulsive nature to the monotony of a common-place existence. I found that apart from a spontaneous genius which might by chance produce something good, there is an acquired tact without which few can hope to become professed and successful

authors. But *necessitas non habet leges.* I managed to accomplish a second literary performance, and forthwith called upon Beak, who accepted the work upon the same terms as before, out of respect for its predecessor. It was duly announced and published, but I believe the sale never reached over fifty copies, and these luckily being commissioned by friends, were disposed of before Herr Shavental could prepare that slashing criticism which represented me to the numerous readers of the *Blunderbuss* as an "ignoramus," a "charlatan," and an "empty-minded, vain-glorious ninnypop."

"There," said I to Beak, as, dashing into his counting-house, I laid the paper on the table, and pointed out the article—"there, have you seen it?"

"I've seen it," he coolly replied; "what of it?"

"What of it!" I exclaimed, in undisguised wonderment—"why, at least, consider my feelings."

"What's your feelings to my loss?" he asked.

"Upon my word, Mr. Beak," I observed, "you don't seem to study me in the least."

"No, of course I don't. It's a clear hundred and fifty out of my pocket, if it's a farthing. What's your venture?—nothing: pen and ink—rags—trash!"

I flew to Vefervesce.

"My dear young friend," said the great man, "those are some of the bitters which in the course of a literary life you must not be surprised to find mixed up with your cup of sweets; but never mind, try the magazines; you may earn a few guineas at it, and you will get your hand in for more important work by-and-by. Called on Lady Topet lately? Saw Brinley Pickle yesterday; said he had met you ruralising in the Park. Principle of severance wrong—wrong altogether, my dear sir; concentrate—concentrate always. Glad to see you any time you are this way. Adieu, adieu."

Miserable enough I felt, I assure you, sir, as I returned home; and to heighten my mortification, who should I see, a long way off, his eyes fixed upon me with a look of pitying reproach, but Plivy. He had read the exterminating criticism in the *Blunderbuss;* there was no doubting it. How dared he presume to feel at all upon the subject? What reciprocity of sentiment could there possibly be between us? I would have accosted him and called him to account for the look, but I reflected that it could not in the least signify to me whether Plivy was gratified or pained, benefited or injured. Plivy indeed!

I tried the magazines for a living, but it turned out but poor work. At one time my articles would remain unnoticed for months, and then I should hear that they had been mislaid, or I should get them returned promptly, with a civil note declining them with thanks. The average successful ventures were ten per cent.; and it required a pretty sharp fire of articles to make it pay. Matters were getting worse and worse. I had been compelled to dispose of my furniture and return to humble lodgings. I now seldom or ever saw Lady Topet, or any of her fashionable friends. My circumstances were altogether altered, and such company was not to be kept. I fell into greater straits than I had ever been in before, and one Sunday afternoon found me in the neighbourhood of the Thames, projecting a leap from off one of the bridges. My landlady had become pressing, and I dared scarcely return home. One

night that, having rung the bell, I stood like a culprit at the door, the girl, on letting me in, asked me to step into the parlour, where sat my landlady. Trembling I entered.

"Mr. Peacock," she said, "soon after you went out this morning a gentleman called, who was very particular in his inquiries about you. I thought it best to tell him the truth, and he insisted upon paying me what you owed me. I asked him if he would leave his name, but he said it didn't matter, that he would write to you; and about an hour afterwards this letter came. I dare say it will tell you who the gentleman was."

I recognised Plivy's handwriting, and I rushed to my room. Enclosed were a five-pound note, and the following copy of an advertisement:

"MEDICAL.—Required for an increasing rural population, a dispensing assistant. A gentleman who has passed the College of Surgeons and could take midwifery cases would obtain the preference. Salary 30*l.* per annum, with board and lodging. Apply, stating age, &c., to Dr. Smith Smythers, Comely, near Winchester, Hants."

Plivy wrote:

"DEAR PEACOCK,—I send you five pounds for your immediate wants. I have replied to the accompanying for you, but you had better write yourself. Should *our* application prove successful, I will most gladly advance you what funds you require for your outfit and comfortable journey down. Come and dine to-morrow at three.—Your very true

"PLIVY."

Sir, the tears started to my eyes, and I buried my face in my hands. Still I turn to you and I say, am I an author? At all events I shall answer the advertisement, and I promise, if I get the berth, to stick to the pestel and mortar until you, sir, have *answered* the query.

DISCOVERIES IN INDIAN ANTIQUITIES.*

A TOPE is a religious edifice dedicated emphatically to Buddha, that is, either to the celestial Adi-Buddha, the great first cause of all things, or to one of his emanations, the Manushi, or mortal Buddhas, of whom the most celebrated is Sakya Muni, who died B.C. 543. Topes were also dedicated to the most illustrious of Sakya's disciples, and to those other Buddha priests who, through superior sanctity, were believed to have attained complete absorption into the divine self-existent spirit from which they originally sprang.

A Tope is a solid hemispherical building, varying in size from the great Sanchi chaitya, which is 106 feet in diameter, to the smallest at Bhojpur, which is only six feet in diameter. The most ancient Topes were simple hemispheres, such as the great Sanchi chaitya, which most probably dates as high as the middle of the sixth century B.C. The next in point of antiquity are most of the Bhilsa Topes, which date from the end of the

* The Bhilsa Topes; or, Buddhist Monuments of Central India: comprising a Brief Historical Sketch of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of Buddhism; with an Account of the Opening and Examination of the various Groups of Topes around Bhilsa. By Major Alexander Cunningham, Bengal Engineers. Smith, Elder, and Co.

third century B.C. In these the hemisphere is raised a few feet above the plinth by the addition of a cylindrical portion. The third class of Topes is found in Affghanistan, and dates about the commencement of the Christian era. In these the hemisphere is raised considerably above the plinth. The last class, of which the Sarnath Tope, near Benares, is a magnificent specimen, has the hemisphere raised to an height equal to its own diameter.

After the Cave Temples, the Topes of the Buddhists are the most remarkable, as well as the most ancient, amongst the many interesting monuments of India. The former have been made known by the pictorial illustrations of Fergusson; but the curious paintings which adorn the interior must be copied, and the numerous inscriptions must be deciphered, before the world will appreciate the full value of these works as illustrations of the religious belief and every-day life of the Indians of Alexander's time.

Of the Topes little or nothing was known till Captain J. D. Cunningham described the largest of the Sanchi group, near Bhilsa; Lieutenant Maisey made drawings of the same remarkable building and of its sculptured gateways, and Major A. Cunningham began a systematic exploration of the groups of Topes around Bhilsa.

The large Tope at Sanchi had been breached on the southern side by Sir Herbert Maddock, about thirty years ago, but the centre of the building had not been reached. The second sized Tope had also been breached; but, although the centre of the building must have been laid open, no relics were obtained, and these clumsy excavations were fortunately abandoned. Major A. Cunningham and Lieutenant Maisey determined to proceed in a different manner, by sinking perpendicular shafts down the middle of each Tope, so as not to injure the external appearance of the building. In this way nearly thirty Topes were opened by these zealous explorers, and the account of the topes themselves, and of the relics they yielded, is now presented to the public in a manner worthy of their value and importance. In the Topes dedicated to the celestial Buddha, the invisible Being who pervaded all space, no deposit was made, but the divine spirit, who is Light, was supposed to occupy the interior, and was typified on the outside by a pair of eyes placed on each of the four sides, either of the base or crown of the building. Such is the great chaitya, near Kathmandu, in Nepaul (Nipal), dedicated to Sambhu or Swayambhunath, in which the eyes are placed on the sides of the crown of the building. Such are also the numerous *chhodtens* in Tibet, which are dedicated to the celestial Buddha, in contradistinction to the dung-tens, which are built in honour of the mortal Buddhas. The first means simply "an offering" to the Deity; the latter, as its name implies, is a "bone (*g-dung*) receptacle," that is, a building containing the bones or relics of one of the mortal Buddhas. In these the eyes occupy the sides of the basement. A specimen of the first kind is represented in the third compartment of the inner face of the left-hand pillar of the eastern gateway at Sanchi, in which the two eyes are placed one above the other.

The great Topes at Sanchi and at Satdhara, in which no deposits were discovered, were, according to Major Cunningham, dedicated to the celestial Buddha *Adinath*, as well as most of the Topes in Affghanistan, in which no relics were found.

The remaining Topes around Bhilsa would appear to have been chiefly the receptacles of relics either of Sakya Muni himself, or of some of his more eminent followers and disciples. Major Cunningham believes that

a minute portion of bone, which was found enshrined in a small crystal Tope, covered by an earthenware box containing various stone beads and scraps of gold, is that of the great sage Sakya Muni himself. The earthenware box had once an ink inscription on the outside of its lid, but as the pot had been first thickly whitewashed, the thin coating had mostly peeled off before it was discovered, and hence they were unable to identify a single letter out of the five or six fragments that remained.

Bone relics were found both at Sanchi and at Satdhara of Sariputra and Maha Mogalana, the right and left-hand disciples of Sakya, and at both places the relics were found in the same Tope. At Sanchi the relic boxes, which were of steatite, were placed in other square stone boxes, on the lids of which were inscribed respectively *Sariputasa*, relic of Sariputra, and *Maha Mogalanasa*, relic of Mogalana. The box of Sariputra was placed to the right, or south, he being the right-hand disciple. Inside the lids of the steatite boxes were inscribed in ink *Sa* and *Ma*, the initial letters of the two names. This, says Major Cunningham, is perhaps the oldest ink-writing in existence.

The next most valuable relics found were those of Mogaliputra, the high-priest of the Buddhist religion, who conducted the proceedings of the third convocation, or religious synod, which was held in 247 B.C. His relics were found both at Sanchi and at Andher. The Sanchi inscription was short, being simply "Relic of the emancipated Mogaliputra;" the Andher inscription was longer, "Relic of the emancipated Mogaliputra, of the family of Goti, race of Atri."

The relics next in importance were those of the missionaries who were despatched to various countries for the propagation of the Buddhist religion immediately after the close of the third convocation, B.C. 247. One of the most eminent of these missionaries was named Goti-putra, and an inscription on a small piece of steatite from Sonari, enclosed in a crystal box with his relics, records as follows: *Sapurisasa Goti-putasa Hemavatasa Dadabhisara Dayadasa*, "Relic of Goti-putra, the brother of religion, to Dardabhisara of the Himavata."

The meaning of *dayada*, literally son, offspring, relative, is best illustrated by the following anecdote from the Mahawanso.

When Asoka had dedicated his son, Mahindo, and his daughter, Sanghamitta, to the priesthood, he inquired from the great priest, Mogaliputra, "whose act of pious bounty to the Buddhist religion had been the greatest?" The crafty priest, "foreseeing that it would tend to the advancement of the faith," replied: "Ruler of men! a greater donor and benefactor of the faith even than thou art, can be called only a benefactor; but he who causes a son or daughter to be ordained a minister of our religion, that person will become not a 'benefactor' (*dayako*) but a 'relation' (*dayado*) of the faith." Gotiputra had therefore earned the same title of *dayado*, by the ordination of a son or daughter, as a minister of the Buddhist religion. But the most interesting part of this inscription is the mention of the country of Dardabhisara as the scene of Gotiputra's missionary labours. These countries lie along the Indus, the former (Dardu of the present day) being to the west, and the latter, Abhisara (the Hazara of our maps), being to the east of the river.

Major Cunningham dwells upon the great importance of these discoveries in the illustration of the early history of India, authenticating as they do, in the fullest manner, the narrative of the most interesting

portions of the reign of the great champion of Buddhism—Asoka—to the history of whose conquests and labours in the dissemination of the faith a learned and interesting chapter is entirely devoted.

The inscriptions which are found upon the rails, pillars, and coping-stones of the colonnaded enclosures at Sanchi, amount to about two hundred and forty. Some of them are of course of but little value; but the whole, taken together, are of considerable importance, as they record the names of cities and of races, and exhibit the language and alphabet of India at the time of Alexander and his successors. The numerous bas-reliefs exhibit the adoration of the Topes, of bo-trees, and of wheels, processions escorting relic-boxes, apparently after a successful campaign for their acquisition and ascetic life in the woods. The most remarkable object of adoration is a peculiar emblem which is found upon most of the old Hindhu coins, and upon all the coins of the Indo-Scythian Kadphises. This emblem surmounted each pillar of the Sanchi gateways; it forms the top of every standard and banner in the processions; it is carved upon the sword-scabbards; and lastly, it is an object of worship singly and also as a triad, where three of these emblems are represented on an altar side by side. Major Cunningham has come to the conclusion that this holy emblem is nothing more than the monogram, formed of the radical letters of the names of the four elements which form "matter" joined to that of "mind," a theory which might throw some light on the oft-disputed meaning of the *crux ansata*. The three monograms arranged together, represent the Buddhist triad, or Buddha "mind," Dharma, "matter," Sangha, union of mind and matter, as in the three figures at Jagannath.

The word Tope, probably more correctly written Tup, is said by Major Cunningham to be derived from Affghanistan, where it is used to designate all the solid mounds of masonry which were opened by Messrs. Honigberger and Masson. But the use of the name among the Affghans is no proof whatsoever of its origin in their country. The Turkish Tuppah, or Teppeh—the Tell of the Arabs—by which the numerous hemispherical mounds in Western Asia—the same as covered in part the ruins of Nineveh, the same as have been found by Layard to be composed of terraces of masonry in Mesopotamia, and by Fraser and others to be in part funereal in Chaldea and Babylonia, and which so particularly abound in North Syria—are all alike designated, has evidently a similar origin. It might, therefore, have come from Central Asia—the home of the Turks—as well as from Affghanistan. There can be no doubt that the name Tope, or Tup, is the same as the Pali Thupo, and the Sanskrit Stupa, a "mound" or "tumulus," both of which terms are of constant use in the Buddhist books.

Major Cunningham admits, also, that Stupas, or Topes, were in existence prior to Sakya's advent. This, he says, appears from several passages in the Pali Buddhistical annals. Stupas had been erected over the relics of saints and heroes in the neighbourhood of Kapila and of Benares before his time, and as their worship was too firmly established to be attacked with any chance of success, Sakya artfully engrafted them on his own system as the Buddhas of a former age. The Tope, or Stupa, appears to have been almost everywhere, from when it was a mere cairn, or pile of stones, the oldest form of funereal memento. The interest connected with such monuments in the East, is, however, that

they are not always funereal, but often remains of various structures, and actual heaps of ruin.

These massive mounds are sometimes surrounded by mysterious circles of stones and pillars in India, as we see also at Ak Diyarin in North Syria; recalling to the mind of the British archæologist his own early earth-works or barrows, and Druidical, or so-called Celtic remains. In the Buddhistical worship of trees displayed in the Sanchi bas-reliefs, may be seen the counterpart of the worship so frequently portrayed on the Assyrian and Babylonian cylinders and bas-reliefs, as also not improbably that of the reverence entertained by the Druids for groves, and for the oak in particular. In the horse-shoe temples of Ajanta and Sanchi may also be recognised the form of the inner colonnade as Stonehenge.

"More," says Major Cunningham, "I suspect, will learn that there are cromlechs in India as well as in Britain; that the Brahmins, Buddhists, and Druids all believed in the transmigration of the soul; that the Celtic language was undoubtedly derived from the Sanscrit; and that Buddha (or Wisdom), the Supreme Being worshipped by the Buddhists, is probably (*most* probably) the same as the great god Buddwas, considered by the Welsh as the dispenser of good." These coincidences are too numerous and too striking to be accidental. Indeed, the Eastern origin of the Druids was suspected by the younger Pliny, who says, "Even to this day Britain celebrates the magic rites with so many similar ceremonies, that one might suppose they had been taken from the Persians." The same coincidence is even more distinctly stated by Dionysius Periegesis, who says that the women of the British Amnitæ celebrated the rites of Dionysos, v. 375 :—

> As the Bristonians on Apsinthus banks
> Shout to the clamorous Eiraphiates,
> Or, as the Indians on dark-rolling Ganges
> Hold revels to Dionysos the noisy,
> So do the British women shout Evoë!

It is to be observed that the Topes which still exist in India, though numerous, are chiefly confined to a few localities. The Topes of Kabul and Jalalabad were opened by Messrs. Honigberger and Masson in 1835, and those between the Indus and the Jhelam by Generals Ventura and Court in 1833 and 1834. The Topes near Benares were opened by Major Cunningham in 1835, and those at Sanchi and other places around Bhilsa were opened last by Major Cunningham and Lieutenant Maisey. The Topes of Tirhut and Bahar still remain to be examined. The important numismatic results, and which first revealed to us the names of the sovereigns of Greek race, and of their Scythian and Parthian successors, who reigned in Central Asia, obtained by the explorations of Messrs. Ventura and Court, have been published by H. T. Prinsep, Esq.: "Note on the Historical Results deducible from recent Discoveries in Affghanistan, 1844;" but no work complete in its historical and archæological details, and perfectly illustrated like the present one of Major A. Cunningham's, has yet been given to the world. If our sympathies were as much interwoven with Central Asia and India as they are with Biblical lands, and if we were as intimate from childhood with Hindhu antiquity as we are with Assyrian, these discoveries would be read and sought after with the same avidity as were the disentombed relics of Nineveh, Khorsabad, and Nimrud.

A VILLAGE TALE.

BY GUSTAV NIERITZ.

XIII.

THE COALS OF FIRE.

HALM believed, when he awoke, that his spirit had winged its flight towards the better world, for a fresh and pure breeze fanned his cheek, under the effect of which he felt so happy and glorious. He listened—he must have opened his mental, not his corporeal, eye; but could the former have been blinded by the full glare of day so that it would be forced to close? But his chest inhaled the air of heaven with an intoxicating feeling, for it could only be that which made him feel so beatified. After a pause, his eye opened once more: yes, that was Friederike, and no one else, who floated before her father, like a messenger from Heaven. But, alas! before her hovered an indistinct shadow with an uncovered, powdered head: will not then the other world be free from painful reminiscences? What had the examiner to do here? Halm's eye again closed in pain. A third glance permitted him to notice a mass of confused forms, which appeared to him familiar, but threatened to disturb his reason so much, that he turned his eye away and fixed it on those in his immediate vicinity. He then perceived close to him a hand, which wore on its gold-finger a simple ring.

"Can it be possible?" Halm's lips now whispered; and his hands were folded together in prayer.

"He lives!" Tinel's voice ejaculated. Halm's fancied abode in the realms of bliss vanished, and a weight pressing on his whole body, proved to him that he was still upon the earth. Two arms embraced him with impetuous tenderness, followed by two others, and two again after them.

"Gotthelf! Husband! Father! Luck!" the sobbing voices said; and Tinel, Friederike, and Carl, covered the restored man with kisses.

"Forwards! no unnecessary delay!" a warning voice exclaimed; "the cold autumn wind is not suited for them."

Upon this Carl and Friederike placed themselves before and behind the litter on which Halm reclined, and his wife walked again by his side, but did not draw her hand from his. And Friederike acted like Lot's wife, for she walked forwards with her head turned back, so that she might look on her father with tears of joy.

"You were sitting up to your knees in water," Madame Halm told her husband on the road home, "when they made their way to you. Fortunately, the passages were only partly covered. All the miners have been saved who were at work in the mine, for only the old, exhausted beds of ore fell in, and have certainly caused so much destruction that it will be years before they can commence working the mine again. We were frightened to death when the slip took place. It seemed just as if the whole earth and our town were being swallowed up. The windows rattled, the doors opened and shut, the ground shook, and the chimney-pots fell down. It seems to me a miracle now, that the accident did not cause my death."

It would require a more powerful pen than mine to describe the scenes that ensued.

The rejoicing mob could hardly be restrained from following the two miraculously saved miners into Halm's house. As it was, his room and closet could scarce contain all the parties interested. Our worthy ex-schoolmaster sat softly and warmly bedded in an easy-chair, and directed his thankful glances at one moment towards heaven, at another on his family. Fahner sat in a similar arm-chair opposite to him, and attended with equal care. Before him stood his father, the examiner, and stroked his hair and cheeks with loving hand.

"My father," his son said to him, "you had a happy thought in sending me here to this high school. During the last hours of my existence I have learned more than at all other schools, gymnasia, academies, and universities. And that man"—he pointed to Halm—"was my tutor. He threw me into the fiery furnace and burned me free from idleness, self-conceit, crime, and infidelity. And along with his rebuking words, God spoke with his thunder, with earthquakes, with his annihilating elements, with all the tortures of the most horrible death. Then the hard coating of my heart burst, like the ground beneath me, and I perceived that I was a grievous sinner. Yes, father, I am no more worthy to be called thy son. Permit me to become a husbandman, and in that capacity do my best to repair the evil I have inflicted. Madame Halm, where is my child and its mother?"

"Not so quick, young man," the former replied. "Had she been aware that her dearest was buried in the mine, she would have died of terror. I will go and prepare her to meet you. As for your child, it shall soon be in your hands."

The ex-schoolmistress left the room, and Fahner continued to his father:

"You too, sir, owe a great debt to this my professor. He is not a plain miner, but the worthy schoolmaster of Strauchitz, whom you——"

"I know it," the examiner interrupted him. "I had scarce hurried hither when the terrible news of the slip reached me, before Madame Halm took me in hand and read me a lecture, even worse than I did her husband previously in the examination. Yes, sir!" the examiner turned to Halm, "your wife has measured me with the same measure I employed towards you. She did not even spare me the wild asses, the eggs, or the eighth wonder of the world. Your wife has been a professor to me as you were to my son, and has taught me what I shall have to guard against in future, in examining schoolmasters. Your hand in reconciliation, colleague! But still for all that, you are an obstinate fellow. Who bade you leave your former situation? Who? I ask. No one. On the contrary, the upper consistory has waited for you to request a second examination, in which less difficult or strange questions would be asked you. For that reason, the vacancy at Reichenberg has not yet been filled, and your resignation was ignored. Do you require that I should give you an explanation and apology in public and in the consistory? Well, then, I consent to do so, for you have saved what was dearest to me on earth. But the upper consistory dare not peril its dignity by taking the first step, or else it would lose all its respect. I did not dream that my companion in the mine was the same schoolmaster whom I afterwards

felt sorry for having treated so scurvily, or else I should have done my duty towards you then."

Halm was greatly moved by this open confession on the part of the chief examiner. Full of shame, he objected: "Your reverence is very kind towards me, without my deserving it. But I did not resign my situation through obstinacy, but because I could not hold it any longer with credit. I would not return to the mine on any account, and it certainly would be a blessing to me if I could again become a schoolmaster, most of all in Strauchitz; but the bigger boys——"

"Oh!" Carl interrupted, "I have managed them; they will receive you, father, with tears of joy and open arms."

"At first, perhaps," Halm objected; "but the bad seed, I fear, will spread like tares among the wheat."

Then leave the situation at Strauchitz to your son as a good commencement," the examiner remarked, "and subject yourself for the one at Reichenberg to a second examination, which will certainly be more favourable than the first. For," the old gentleman continued, with a gracious smile, "Zinnberg may have also been a high school for you."

"It is true," Halm confessed, "that during my hours of rest I have gone through the geography of Galilee, which I had hung up out of the way. Nor shall I so easily forget the wild asses of Corsica, and if your reverence give me a longer text, I trust I could write more suitably upon it than I did before. I will do anything for the sake of that walking feather-bed"—he pointed to his son Adolph—"in whom, as the fever proved, a stamper was spoiled. Boy! if you march back to your bed directly, you shall return to your Latin school, even if I am forced to become a watchman!"

Ei! how quickly Adolph jumped into bed.

"That is the ready Latinist," the examiner asked, "who on my former visit translated the "Aurora Musis amica? I promise him, if he continue on the good path he has already commenced, a scholarship at the government school."

"Too much!" Halm sobbed. "It is fortunate my Tinel is no longer in the room, or I should be forced to consent to everything. But here she comes!"

And Madame Halm appeared in the open doorway, bearing in her arms a rosy babe in snow-white clothing. She laid it in young Fahner's lap, and said, rebukingly and kindly at the same time:

"Wicked man, you do not deserve such an angel. For, if it had been left to you, the mother and child would now be lying in the copper pond as food for the fishes. What objection have you, pray, to the miller's daughter? Is she not handsome, well-born, or rich enough for you? A hundred others would have fought about her; and while God and my Gotthelf have taken mercy on the poor girl, the boy shall also be christened Gotthelf, whether you like it or not."

"My name is Gotthelf too," said the examiner; "and, in truth, God has helped us all."

"Then help me too, father, in repairing the fault I have committed," young Fahner implored. "This child is mine—and your grandson. But where is its mother? Oh! lead me to her!"

"Remain seated, young gentleman!" Madame Halm commanded.

"His dear one is no puny town lady, that she cannot leave her bed for an hour or so and change it for a warm room. She is already dressed, but has not courage to visit her beloved in the presence of so many witnesses."

At the moment when Catharine made her appearance at the door, blushing and confused, conducted by Madame Halm, a cart stopped before the house. The door was hurriedly torn open, and the miller and his wife rushed in with the cry:

"Where—where is our child—our dear daughter?"

The young and charming mother passed from one embrace to another. The miller wanted at first to vent his passion on the pretended landscape-painter, but Madame Halm would not suffer the threatening clouds to collect. Like a clever blacksmith, she struck the iron while still hot.

The examiner was the first, with his grandson on his arm, to lay the hands of the couple in one another. The miller and his wife did so after him.

"In Strauchitz," he said at the same time, "there is a farm for sale for 5000 crowns, which provides the owner with a comfortable living. I will give my daughter one-half the purchase-money as her dowry."

"And I the other half," the examiner said.

"My Catharine understands the management of a farm," the miller continued, "and we'll soon teach master son-in-law all he wants to know."

"And his young wife will take care that he remains within his own fences, and does not reach after forbidden fruit," Madame Halm said, with a most meaning nod towards her daughter Friederike, who made a gesture of denial.

Young Fahner blushed at this warning and maintained silence, which appeared to the schoolmistress a good sign.

The miller now turned to Halm.

"Schoolmaster!" he commenced, "do you see the pan of burning coals you have heaped upon my head? I will not now go through the whole of the goodness and love you have displayed towards me. But I must confess, loudly and openly, that you not only taught, but practised, the severest duties of Christianity. Who ever speaks an evil word against your mode of teaching or life, I will drive all his lying teeth down his throat, if the affair cost me a hundred crowns or more. My fattest pig shall go into your sty, and for the future your wife need not provide meal, butter, eggs, and milk for the fair or Christmas cakes. And I will put the beadle's head straight, if it is not so already, in respect to you."

As soon as it was possible, without danger to the two sick children, Halm returned to Strauchitz with his whole family in the miller's cart in triumph.

All the villagers, great and small, were collected, and saluted their worthy schoolmaster with repeated shouts of joy. The school-children had raised a triumphal arch before the school-house of fir-tree branches, and in want of flowers had decorated it with red and yellow-cheeked apples, in which occupation those boys formerly the most impudent had been the leaders. Dressed in their Sunday best, they greeted their old master with the beautiful hymn, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" which caused the schoolmaster's heart and eyes to overflow. The

family, to their no trifling surprise, found, besides the grateful miller's fattest pig, all the former occupants of the various stalls and cotes returned, down to Elise's favourite pigeons—a present which the whole parish, on the solicitation of the miller and the beadle, had made them.

When evening came, and the vesper-bell was rung in the church steeple, Halm folded his hands in prayer and thanksgiving. Then, drawing his faithful wife to his bosom, he said:

"It is a different sound from that of the shaft-house bell in Zinnberg, and I fancied I heard these tones in the other world."

XIV.

THE TORN SLEEVE, AND THE CONCLUSION.

Not to let the favourable opportunity pass by which was to help his son Carl to a good situation, Halm at length decided on subjecting himself to a second examination as to the school of Reichenberg. The people of Strauchitz had so much the less objection to raise against it, that they were perfectly satisfied with Carl's management; besides this, there was danger in having Friederike in the same place with young Fahner, which might easily lead to annoyances, although Friederike carefully avoided any intercourse with the examiner's son.

"But, Gotthelf!" Madame Halm complained, when her husband left his room, in readiness to commence his journey to the Residence, "what have you been doing with yourself? You seem stuffed out, and your coat actually threatens to burst."

"Leave me!" Halm replied, abstractedly. "Pray—yes, pray during my absence—for if I were to meet with disgrace again, it would be my death. This journey is truly distasteful to me; but what will not a father do for the sake of his children?"

Madame Halm was glad to be silent, and, with her children, took leave of the schoolmaster tearfully, for whose success they then fervently prayed. How slowly the days passed until Halm returned! How anxiously they watched for his arrival in turn! At length he came, at the time when the schoolmistress herself was performing the duties of sentry.

"Children!" she cried, mournfully, "prepare yourselves for the worst—your father's coming with a solemn face and gentle step through the village. What shall we be forced to hear?"

When Halm entered the house with a kind though earnest salutation, the schoolmistress, in her terror, dare scarcely thank him.

"Have you met with——?" she at length stammered, and then stopped to look at her husband with fixed eyes and pallid face.

"A repulse?" Halm completed his wife's question. "No! dear Tinel, I have no repulse, but a second class, with special marks of approbation. They had even intended to give me a first, the secretary of the consistory told me confidentially, but altered it into a second, not to make the contrast with the repulse too glaring. The chief-ex. presented me, after the examination, to the president and to the minister of state, and both these noble gentlemen graciously pressed my hand, praised me, and dismissed me with great distinction. I was obliged to dine with the examiner each day, and, besides, received from him a most liberal sum for my travelling

expenses. It is, however, just this kind treatment which renders me so melancholy, for I am compelled to say to myself that I have not deserved it. I have clearly seen my unworthiness through it."

"Well, and the examination," Madame Halm inquired—"how did that go on?"

"Better than I had hoped or fancied," Halm replied, and took off his coat.

"Husband! Gotthelf! what have you been about?" Madame Halm cried, in horror—"put on your old jacket with the patched sleeve under your coat. That was the reason you looked so helplessly stout! Oh! what can the gentlemen of the consistory have thought of you and me? It was too bad to disgrace me so!"

"Calm yourself, wife," Halm replied. "Wearing this jacket procured me honour—not disgrace. When I, poor sinner, sat again opposite the examiners, and they opened their mouths to question me, all the colours of the rainbow played before my eyes. I thought this would be the case, and so I put on the jacket. I looked upon the torn sleeve in my terror, and though I could not see it for my coat, it was visibly before my eyes, and the mad dog, and the bound miller, and his daughter at the pond rose before me. My head then became clear, and I was able to answer bravely, and missed scarce one question. I will, therefore, preserve the old jacket as a sainted relic, like the soldiers hang up their weatherbeaten flags in the arsenal. But when the examiner asserts that I gave up my school here without cause, I must contradict him, and insist, that if I was declared incompetent for the vacancy at Reichenberg, I must be equally so for Strauchitz, and was forced to resign."

"You are an obstinate fellow," Madame Halm said; but, nevertheless, drew him to her heart, and consoled him.

Ten years have since elapsed. Master Halm is perfectly at home in Reichenberg, and has planted a famous jasmine arbour in his garden, where he passes his summer mornings and evenings. Carl, his first-born, is still schoolmaster of Strauchitz, and imitates his father in all good—for instance, in the education of his children. Young Fahner had kept his promise, and lives a pious life. Friederike has been married for eight years to a rich farmer, and has three blooming children. Adolph, on the other hand, is studying bravely at the university, and is the pride and joy of his parents. Elise, as nest egg, presides as a blooming housekeeper in the paternal home; and if any one of my marrying readers has not yet made his choice, I advise him to knock as speedily as possible at Father Halm's door and ask Elise's hand—or else the girl might be caught up, like the first haul of fish after a long frost.

MUSICAL MISERIES.

FOREIGNERS say—but then foreigners will say almost anything—that the English are not a musical people. Now, if having a rage for pianos to a degree that renders your neighbourhood insupportable, if hearing strains, politely called harmonious, in one constant stream, or rather, in many clashing and mingling streams from morning to night, is a sign of being musical, then we differ from the opinion of foreigners in general, and maintain that England is *the very land* of music, the foster-nurse of every kind and description of melody and harmony, from the hurdy-gurdy of the Savoyard to the strains of Grisi. Opinion may differ as to the *quality*, but for the quantity——let those who doubt it come and spend a month beneath our roof: we should like to see the Frenchman who would survive the trial. We are much mistaken if half that period would elapse ere he found himself once more on the Boulevards, inveighing against English fare, and still more against English music.

We live in a quiet street, metaphorically so called, that is, a street in which no omnibus turns its profane wheels, where cab-horses are rarely seen, and carriages, like phœnixes, come but one at a time. But what of this? Is it not the paradise of Italian boys, the refuge of white mice, the resort of monkeys, the well and palm-tree of wild Indians, the visited of every beggar, except the dumb? There is not an interesting family, the victims of some dreadful calamity, with seven children of a size and three babies in arms, that does not chant the wail of its misfortunes beneath our windows—there is not a struggling-against-poverty widow, dressed to look as if she had seen better days, and would be insulted by any smaller coin than sixpence, who does not howl out her "I remember, I remember," opposite our first-floor—there is not an exportation in white calico, with a red turban, who does not bring his drum and sing outlandish words to familiar melodies, till our nerves are thrilled by his woes! Would that, like the Israelites of old in their exile, these interesting foreigners could be induced to hang their drums on a tree of any description, willow or otherwise, and there leave them and us in peace!

We do not mind ordinary street cries—we do not expect to be exempt from the milkman's shriek, the butcher-boy's whistle, or the constant knocks and rings at everybody's door and our own in particular. No, we would as soon complain of the tax-gatherer, or the water-rate collector, or any other honoured institution of our country; but we cannot consider the "Old Hundredth" and "Cheer boys, cheer," calculated for a duet, nor do we think "Deh Conté," with variations, likely to reconcile them. We do not see the affinity between the young lady who is always riding in a low-backed car and "Pop goes the weasel;" nor are we disposed to think the Marseillaise, on an accordion at the same time, compatible with the rules of strict harmony. We would endure calmly one little Savoyard, once a day, for the sake of pleasant memories of his native valleys, for the remembrance he awakes of the deep mountain shadows that fall across them; but when he comes in close vicinity to a brass band, consisting of five instruments, on which five individuals play the

overture to "Semiramide" in five different keys, our philosophy is shaken, and our poetical endurance vanishes at the end of the first bar.

In the same way we confess to a relish for Punch and Judy. We like Punch and Judy, and we pity the man, woman, or child, who does not; not that we believe in the existence of such miserable beings either; for we never knew the father yet who did not make the children an excuse for obtaining a view himself of that enlightened drama, nor the old bachelor who didn't peep round the window-corner, to avail himself of the treat granted to a neighbouring nursery. It may not be moral—we do not pretend it is; we have heard it asserted that its principles are revolutionary; that it mocks at authority by carrying public sympathy with the offender, and casts a slur on the police; but we do not believe it—not a whit! Let our fustian-jacket friend watch Punch beating Judy, and our word for it he is less likely to go home and thrash *his* own poor Judy, who is now so often obliged to expose her black eyes and bruised neck in a police court. Let him have a good hearty laugh at Punch as he eludes the constable, and it will do more to dispel the brooding ill-begotten thoughts that want and drink set cankering in his brain, than a host of political speeches exhorting to moderation.

But we are digressing in our ardour for a favourite hero; what we mean to say is this—let Punch come alone, and he is welcome; but let him bring in his train a harp,—a family of tumblers,—a blind flute-player,—the accordion and the nigger melodies,—and we close our blinds, withdraw to the back of the house, and curse the hour in which we were tempted to pitch our tent in a quiet street.

But even *this* we might endure, so great is our philosophy—even *this*, though it begins with our breakfast and lasts to the moment of our retiring to rest, but for other music more distracting still,—we allude to the second-floor, and the neighbours next door. Whatever is going on in the street, they are going on too—whatever discordance is audible without, they never relent for a moment within.

Our second-floor is occupied by a music-teacher—poor thing, Heaven knows her scanty earnings can ill repay her for the trouble she has, but even *that* thought doesn't reconcile us to her pupils. We wonder, as we sit listening (it is impossible not to listen) to that dreary boy (his father is an ambitious greengrocer), who stumbles through an exercise for five fingers, plays the bass and treble of easy lessons one after the other, at intervals of two minutes, and brings out every note as if somebody behind him made him jump,—we wonder whether our pushing him over the banisters, or dropping him quietly out of the back window, would not be considered justifiable homicide by an enlightened jury. We are sure of it, if their deliberations were carried on in our room, under similar aggravations, especially if they followed our profession, and were bound to produce so many pages in so many days.

We confess to strange jumbles in our literary productions caused by these our mental and bodily sufferings. We have more than once entered the sentiment of "A good time coming, boys," in the midst of political growlings; have sentimentalised over "Annie Laurie" on a commercial question; and made "Rory O'More" pair off with "Nelly Bly" in a midnight debate.

But our next door neighbours! Alas, our next door neighbours! "A great many young ladies," we hear a sympathising reader exclaim. "A boarding-school," cries another. "A young gentleman learning the violin," says a third. No, dear friends, worse than that—worse than all you can imagine.

Our next door neighbours comprise all these in one; they are an epitome of all the pupils up-stairs; they are the sum total of all our grievances in the street, the voluntary encores of all our musical aggravations. They are concert givers: which means, they are "getting up" pieces from morning to night;—they are talented: which means, that they play difficult music, far above their powers;—they are enterprising: *Anglicè*, they are never tired;—they are getting on: synonymous with the expression, they never leave off.

Are you indulging in a quiet morning reverie, at that interesting moment when you know you ought to have got up half an hour ago?—They are beforehand with you; they are at it; catch them napping indeed! Crash!—they come down with a chord that makes you spring from your pillow;—whir-r-r-r up the piano, down the piano, soft pedal—loud pedal—both pedals—there is no more rest,—you know the piece, it is twenty-seven pages long, and they always go through it three times at least. There is nothing for it but to rise and dress and rush away, as if a demon were at your heels. But woe to you on your return, for that demon awaits you beside your hearth; it is learning the treble of a duet, it is practising the bass,—it is squalling exercises, it is trying a shake,—it is breaking out with fresh vigour while I write, within half an hour of midnight—it will never cease till it has exhausted itself, and then only for a few short hours. Shall I ever forget when the tenor voice got up "With verdure clad" for their last concert? Have I not associated him with that remarkable costume ever since? Has he not been continually presented to my mind in the green apparel indicated by that line? Do I not connect the memory of his mother with mermaids? I have never seen him,—no—I only hear him; but that one faculty is so absorbed, there is no room for the exercise of any other.

What is to be done? Is there no medium between silence and distraction?—no possibility of music without noise? Is the foreigner right after all? Are we, indeed, not a musical nation, but only trying to become so? Is it a mistake in the education of our sons and daughters that, whether they have any real taste or not, they *must* learn to play? We don't know—we are too distracted to think. Is there no science for obtaining silence, no means of preventing sound from penetrating our windows, our ceilings, our walls? "Walls have ears," says the proverb; can't they be made deaf? "There is music in silence," say the poets; can't the organ-boys be convinced of it? Couldn't a society be formed for sending out missionaries to convert them to a knowledge of this fact? There are plenty of companies to insure our lives; cannot one be established to insure our peace? Cannot, at any rate, a street here and there be saved from these visitations, and branded with some mark that shall preclude the entrance of noise? Or cannot all the professionals be made to live in one quarter, and have the gates closed upon them at a certain hour, as with the Jews in Rome?

We have a friend who, after having been victimised for some time by a young gentleman who practised the flute with untiring energy in the adjoining room to that he occupied, hired an Italian boy with his organ, and, turning the key upon him, desired him to play without intermission the whole day long. The boy obeyed; he played all that day and all the next. At the end of the second day the flute-player sent a polite message to our friend, requesting him to discontinue his new amusement. "Avec plaisir," said the polite Frenchman, "on condition that monsieur renounces his flute."

"Mais, monsieur, c'est impossible," pleaded the young man; "I have a taste for the flute."

"C'est facheux, mon cher monsieur," said his antagonist, with a deprecating but decisive shrug; "but I have a taste for the barrel-organ." The flute changed its lodgings that very evening.

We had thought of imitating our friend's example, of seducing a drummer into our establishment, and forcibly compelling him to keep up his perpetual rub-a-dub-dub till our enemies, vanquished, fled on every side. But when imagination pictured our own sufferings during this period,—when we tried to realise a drummer's home, and thought what must be the distraction of his domestic hearth, what utter depression of spirits must fall upon his wife and children whenever he performed a solo on that instrument, we desisted; our courage failed us, and we resolved rather to suffer in silence. Oh! mockery!

"In silence," we said; would it were possible! Yet there must be remedies somewhere; we will give our readers a—— No, it is impossible, our brain is turning—Thalberg has broken out next door—Czerny is rattling overhead—a wooden-legged sailor is inventing pangs in the street—an opposition violin and flute are under our window—there is a man with dancing dogs over the way, and bagpipes round the corner;—we succumb, we have no strength for more.

There is a knock; we look up helplessly and hopelessly. An envelope is extended towards us: "If you please, sir, the lady next door's compliments, and she's sent you tickets for the concert they gives to-morrow night."

Their concert! And this is England, this a free country! We are choked with indignation! A concert indeed!

THE OLD BARON.

On the outskirts of our town there stood a stately old mansion with a spacious court-yard, which was overshadowed by such dense foliage that the rays of the sun were entirely excluded. The lower part of the building was let out to any of the townspeople who chose to occupy it, but in the upper story there lived a mysterious personage—an old baron, who had retired from the world with his old servant to this dismal abode. A gloomy silence pervaded these regions, where no footsteps but those of the baron and his servant were overheard. At all times of the year, by day and by night, the windows, shutters, and curtains were closed, and, but for the dim candles which were continually burning in the old gentleman's apartments, you would never have dreamt of these rooms being inhabited.

Little was known of the baron, except that he had a decided antipathy to the female sex. No maid-servant, no female, was ever permitted to set foot on his staircase under any pretext whatever; but if one of the inmates of the lower story happened to meet him, he hurried out of her way like a scared owl. John (for such was the servant's name) performed all the domestic duties with surprising exactness, though all the maids in the neighbourhood seemed to take great interest in watching him, and sneered scornfully when they saw him, with his tall, lean figure in livery and powdered hair, toiling up the steps with his pail of water, sweeping the premises, or washing cabbages, which, though he was the laughing-stock of all, he performed with the greatest gravity and decorum.

As a faithful servant to his master, John considered himself in duty bound to share in his hatred of women, though not having any particular reason of his own, or even knowing why. Since he could not undertake the washing of his master's clothes, he made a point of leaving them at the washerwoman's when he knew that she would not be at home, and was in the greatest hurry to get away when he fetched them back. In making purchases he always preferred to have dealings with the proprietor or his shopmen. For these reasons he was condemned to hear many bitter sarcasms from the offended sex, especially from the maids at the pump, and the market-women.

"Mr. John," said they, "why do you not get milk from oxen and cock's eggs for your master? You need not give yourself such airs, Master John, for with a shilling in your mouth you are not worth sixpence."

John heard these taunts with dignified contempt, and was quite delighted to have some pretext for hating women; he only longed for some sympathising soul to whom he might communicate his feelings on this point. For the baron studiously avoided the subject; so that one day, when John ventured to make a familiar remark: "In this town the women are so impudent; I am so plagued and tormented by them!" his master looked at him with such astonishment and displeasure, that he never alluded to the subject again.

John's indignation rose to the highest point when Monsieur Meuret established himself on the ground-floor, whilst his wife set up an infant-

school for little girls. On this occasion John could not prevail on himself to keep silence.

"Do you know, sir, that a French woman has brought here a whole pack of little girls? Is it your honour's pleasure that I should drive them away?"

The baron shook his head, and contented himself with avoiding the troop of children when they came near him; and one day he actually tapped one of the little girls on the shoulder, and gave her a very stale *bonbon*—an event which made quite a sensation in the school.

The only sound which interrupted the profound silence was that of the bell, which was heard summer and winter at six o'clock in the morning. John soon obeyed its summons, and, bringing in two wax candles, he gravely asked if the baron had slept well, whilst he extinguished the night-light.

"Pretty well, John," was the invariable answer; after which John began to assist in his toilet, with as much care and attention as if his master had been the greatest beau. As soon as the clock struck seven, the baron betook himself to a side chamber, where John waited on him during breakfast. From eight till eleven the baron was reading in his library, which consisted only of French novels and philosophical works. Since he bade adieu to novels and the ladies, we may easily suppose that with this kind of reading he became more and more unpractical and estranged from the world.

In the afternoon he took an hour's walk on the ramparts, which were planted round with rows of chesnuts, whilst John followed him at a respectful distance: for the remainder of the day neither of them again stirred from their dismal abode.

In former years the baron had held a position at court, and had occasionally visited the old mansion, to which he held a claim. But ever since he had permanently settled there, for many years he never again passed the threshold; and, but for the occasional appearance of John, the townspeople would have remained in ignorance whether the old baron was dead or alive.

In consequence of thus living without light, air, or exercise, the baron had at last been seized by a dangerous illness. A physician was called in, who prescribed change of air; but the baron would not listen to it, and shook his head without saying a word.

The princess at whose court he had lived for many years happened to hear of his illness and obstinate opposition to medical advice, and was induced to drive over and inquire after his health. His accustomed deference to rank prevailed in this instance over his antipathy to the female sex; the princess was introduced, and her gentle, winning manners produced a better result than the doctor's advice.

The baron recovered, and from that time he took his daily walk, and appeared twice a year at the levee of the princess—on new year's day and on her birthday. The ladies at court, like the maids and market-women in John's case, would gladly have availed themselves of these rare opportunities to impress him favourably by their bewitching graces, or to revenge themselves by satirical allusions; but all was unheeded, since he regarded with the same indifference wit, beauty, and deformity, and addressed his polite speeches to the princess alone.

Since his recovery he began to attend church, and became an object of universal mirth and astonishment, especially to the children of the town, when during winter he appeared in public with a large muff. No one in the town remembered him as a young man; he had already the appearance of an elderly person when he first came to the place.

There was but one tie which united him to his fellow-creatures, but one pleasure which he had never denied himself—it was *that* of doing good. No public or private distress came under his notice but his hand was ever ready to relieve it, however—as unostentatiously and secretly as possible; and though he never would receive words of gratitude from those whom he had relieved, yet many a silent prayer has been offered up for him, and exercised a benign influence over his desolate path.

Besides the poor, he was held in the greatest esteem by the chandlers, for he was such an excellent customer that they would have wished the whole population to resemble him in his eccentricities. It is indeed a matter of grievous reflection, that every trouble and distress to which human nature is subject is at the same time a source of gain and profit to our neighbour. We are birds of prey, from the field-marshal to the gravedigger, all striving to live upon and turn to our own advantage the frailties and miseries of mankind. I once heard an apothecary's wife saying with great vexation: "The cholera does not come after all!" Hail-storms and riots are the happy days for glaziers; woollen-drapers hail the season for rheumatism; the poor tailor's children get their daily bread by mending the torn clothes of an unfortunate wight, who meanwhile is obliged to stay from school, and comes in for a sound drubbing at the hands of his affectionate mother; and thus the baron's peculiar fancy of shutting out the daylight afforded great satisfaction to his neighbour the chandler, who was in other respects the most good-natured soul in the world.

The old baron's lamp of life was at last burnt out like his candles. On a cool, bright autumnal morning, the windows and shutters of his mansion were for the first time thrown open; the rays of the sun fell for the first time on the bed on which the old baron was laid, whilst the doctor attended for the purpose of holding an inquest. A cousin of his was summoned from a distance, in order to take possession of the baron's property, which, to judge from his charities, had appeared much greater than it was in reality.

The young baron had not been personally acquainted with his cousin, but having a turn for the romantic, he felt much interested in ascertaining the reasons which had induced the old gentleman to lead such a melancholy life, but without much success. The baron had taken his secret with him into his grave; for John had only been engaged a short time previous to his settling in the old mansion, and there was no one else to give any information. Only the portrait of a beautiful lady, which was found in a secret drawer of his writing-desk, proved that the baron had not always entertained such a great antipathy to ladies.

A rumour—for the truth of which we cannot vouch—says, that at the beginning of his career at court he made some sad experience, which would clear up the mystery. It is one of those grievous stories which are of frequent occurrence at courts—the story of a young, inexperienced page, with all the vigour and freshness of youthful feeling, who falls

hopelessly in love with a proud and haughty beauty, and suddenly attains the object of his highest wishes by one word of the prince.

What the fair bride confided to the happy bridegroom on the wedding morning has never passed his lips. It must, indeed, have been a dark secret which banished him that same morning from his bride as well as from all his fair prospects in the world—which caused him ever after to shun the light of the sun, and bid farewell for ever to the fair sex, to love, and domestic happiness.

The baron's ancient coat of arms has remained untarnished, but of the fate of his fair bride, her guilt and sufferings, nothing is known.

Fifty years have nearly passed since the mortal remains of the baron were removed to their last home. Many inmates have entered and departed from the old building, till at last it became an asylum which offered a quiet retreat and social happiness to those ladies who wished to escape from the cares and anxieties of the world. Now farewell to gloom and darkness! Though the bright morning of youth has long since departed from the inmates of the old mansion, they may still enjoy, for awhile, the last rays of the setting sun which smiles on the evening of their lives. And if the spirit of the old baron could arise from his tomb, and enter again the ancient halls of his ancestors, he would surely not consider them desecrated by the presence of these humble and resigned old ladies, and would learn that even those whose path has been strewn with more thorns than roses, may do better than bury themselves in solitude and darkness.

THE WITCHERY OF LIFE.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

Give me back my youth.—Dr. Walcot.

The desire of enjoying perpetual youth may be as natural as it is pleasing to man; but as the preservation of its bloom and of its vigour is unattainable, either by the most abstruse study or the most incessant vigilance—as its decay is an inevitable consequence of the undeviating laws of time—as childhood yields to youth—so must youth yield to maturity—maturity to senility. Such is the pre-ordained progression of being; and as such *is* its pre-ordained, its invariable progression, it is truly lamentable to find that that which is so unalterable should be still so universally regretted.

The most lofty inspirations of the Muse have been expended in deploring the brevity of life's young and brilliant dawn; historians and divines have strikingly and pathetically commented on its swift and shadowy fleetness; and even the psalmist has not omitted to dwell on the rapid flight of the most fascinating period of human existence with sublime and affecting eloquence. To so bewail that which is, however, beyond

all remedy, appears, upon reflection, as unphilosophical as it is useless. What, then, can be more unworthy of the dignity of man than the mourning over the vanished years which no complainings can restore, and enduring that vain anguish which no hope can mitigate? How much more human then—how much more Christian-like would it be in any one—in every one, however feeble the powers of persuasion which may be possessed, to strenuously and earnestly endeavour to reconcile the sorrowful mind to the loss of that youth which so pains and so distresses it!—to strenuously and earnestly endeavour to shame it out of the weak and puerile grief, which is as unbecoming as it is degrading to the soul which aspires to that second youth, which is indeed everlasting! And the more imperative is it on all who think seriously and fear holily to make such effort in behalf of erring humanity; as, alas! this repining, although so acutely, so poignantly experienced, does not arise—seldom, if ever, has arisen from the reproachful conviction of the waste of that youth in sin and in folly—from its misemployment in crime and in corruption—from the ardent and contrite compunctions of conscience to repossess it, for the purpose of repairing the past, of atoning for former trangressions—for living, not for time, but for eternity—but simply and ignorantly to be young once again—once again to pursue the same heedless and unprofitable track—once again to run the same guilty and condemnatory career—once again to be led astray by the same dazzling and futile ambitions—once again to commit the same heinous offences—and once again to lay up that store of evil, which may well wed the heart to this world, as its sole portion of good—as its insurmountable barrier to that above the spheres.

A few—a very few, of the most notable death-beds on record will suffice to prove the truth of these somewhat startling preliminary remarks:—for instance, to commence with that of Cardinal Beaufort, as described by Shakspeare—how awfully, how appallingly terrific has the poet depicted it! Who can read without an inward shuddering the vivid description presented in the following scene of the impenitent agony of the expiring Churchman—the intense horror of his monarch at that ruthless impenitence!

K. Hen. How fares my lord? Speak, Beaufort, to thy sovereign.
Car. If thou be'st Death, I'll give thee England's treasure,
Enough to purchase such another island,
So thou wilt let me live, and feel no pain.
K. Hen. Ah! what a sign it is of evil life
When death's approach is seen so terrible!
War. Beaufort, it is thy sovereign speaks to thee.
Car. Bring me unto my trial when you will.
Died he not in his bed? where should he die?
Can I make men live wh'er they will or no?
O! torture me no more, I will confess.
Alive again? then show me where he is;
I'll give a thousand pound to look upon him.
He hath no eyes, the dust hath blinded them.
Comb down his hair: look! look! it stands upright,
Like lime-twigs set to catch my winged soul!
Give me some drink; and bid the apothecary
Bring the strong poison that I bought of him.

K. Hen. O thou eternal mover of the heavens,
Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!
O, beat away the busy meddling fiend
That lays strong hold upon this wretch's soul,
And from his bosom purge this black despair!
War. See, how the pangs of death do make him grin.
Sal. Disturb him not: let him pass peaceably.
K. Hen. Peace to his soul, if God's good pleasure be!
Lord Cardinal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,
Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope.—
He dies—and makes no sign! O God forgive him!

This horrible picture of a too latent remorse—this dying, and making no sign—is neither embellished by poetic colouring nor heightened by poetic exaggeration, but is strictly in accordance with the portrayal of the death of Cardinal Beaufort, as found both in the chronicles of Hall, and in the history of Hume—the former stating that, when in extremity, he impiously inquired, "Why should I dye, having so muche riches? If the whole realme would save my lyfe, I am able either by pollicie to get it, or by ryches to buy it. Fye, will not Death be hyred, nor will money do nothynge? When my nephew of Bedford died, I thought myselfe halfe up the whele, but when I saw my nephew of Gloucester disceased, then I thought myselfe able to be equal with kinges, and so thought to increase my treasure, in hope to have worne a trypple croune. But I see now the worlde fayleth me, and so I am deceyed." And the latter remarking, "The Cardinal of Winchester died six weeks after his nephew, whose murder was universally ascribed to him, as well as to the Duke of Suffolk, and which, it is said, gave him more remorse in his last moments than could naturally be expected from a man hardened, during the course of a long life, in falsehood and in politics."

Not less pregnant with the instruction which maketh wise unto salvation was also the final end of that other notoriously wily and subtle dignitary, Cardinal Mazarin; one equally hardened, during the course of a long life, in falsehood and in politics; one who did attain to the wearing of almost a triple crown, for he was the absolute monarch of France and its dependencies during the long minority of Louis XIV.; one who, when he came to die—when he found the world failing him—would, too, have purchased life at the free sacrifice of all his stupendous and ill-gotten wealth—would, too, have bribed Death by the free sacrifice of the state which he was sworn to protect; but Death scorned the *optima spolia* thus treacherously presented to him, claiming alone his just and tremendous debt.

Nothing is more humiliating to the haughty arrogance of man, than the abjectness of the grief evinced by Mazarin at being sundered from the scene of his mundane grandeur—the theatre of his mundane splendour—his insane attempts to repair the ravages of disease—his childish sorrow at leaving wealth, luxury, and power.

"Sept ou huit jours avant sa mort," writes Alexandre Dumas, "un caprice singulier passa par l'esprit du cardinal: il fit faire sa barbe, relever sa moustache et couvrir ses joues de blanc et de rouge, de sort que de sa vie il n'avait été si frais ni si vermeil. Alors il monta dans sa chaise à porteurs, qui était ouverte par devant, et alla faire un tour

dans le jardin, malgré le froid qu'il faisait, car ce que nous racontons se passait au commencement de Mars. Ainsi l'étonnement fut-il grand, chacun croyait rêver en voyant passer le cardinal dans cet équipage, rejeuni tout à coup comme Esou."

He also tells us, that—

"Un jour Brienne, son secrétaire, était dans une galerie où Mazarin avait fait placer ses plus beaux tableaux, ses plus belles statues et ses plus beaux vases; il entendit un bruit de pantouffles traînantes, accompagné d'une respiration étouffée, et se doutant que c'était le malade, il se cacha derrière une magnifique tapisserie executée sur les dessins de Jules Romain, et qui avait appartenu au Maréchal de Saint-André.

"En effet, c'était le cardinal lui-même; le malade entra, il se croyait seul, et traînant avec peine d'une chaise à l'autre:

"'Il faut quitter cela,' disait-il, 'et encore cela, et cela, et cela! Que j'ai eu de peine, mon Dieu! à acquérir ces choses qu'il faut que je quitte aujourd'hui! car, hélas! je ne les reverrai où je vais.'

"Cette plainte d'un homme si envié attendrit Brienne; il poussa un soupir, Mazarin l'entendit.

"'Qui est là?' s'écria-t-il, 'qui est là?'

"'C'est moi, monseigneur,' dit Brienne, 'j'attendais le moment de parler à votre eminence d'une lettre fort importante qui je viens de recevoir!'

"'Approchez, Brienne, approchez,' dit le cardinal, 'et donnez-moi la main, car je suis bien faible; mais ne me parlez point d'affaires, je vous prie, je ne suis plus en état de les entendre; adressez-vous au roi et faites ce qu'il dira; quant à moi, j'ai bien autre chose en tête maintenant.'

"Puis revenant à sa pensée:

"'Voyez-vous, mon ami, ce beau tableau du Corrége,' continua-t-il, 'et encore cette Vénus du Titien, et cet incomparable Déluge d'Antoine Carrache, et bien! mon ami, il faut quitter tout cela!—Oh! mes tableaux, mes chers tableaux, que j'aime tant et qui m'ont tant côuté!'

"'Oh! monseigneur,' lui dit Brienne, 'vous vous exagerez votre position, et vous êtes certainement moins mal que vous ne le pensez.'

"'Non, Brienne, non, je suis bien mal; d'ailleurs, pourquoi désirerais-je vivre, quand tout le monde désire ma mort?'

"'Monseigneur se trompe, nous ne sommes plus au temps des passions; c'était bon dans la Fronde, mais aujourd'hui personne ne fait plus de parails souhaits.'

"'Personne (Mazarin essaya sourire) vous savez bien cependant qu'il y a un homme qui la souhaite, cette mort; mais n'en parlons plus, il faut mourir, et plutôt aujourd'hui que demain—Ah! il la souhaite, ma mort, va, je le sais.'

"Brienne n'insista point; il comprenait que le ministre voulait parler du roi, qu'on savait avoir hâte de gouvener; d'ailleurs Mazarin regagna son cabinet, et fit signe à son secrétaire de le laisser seul.'

"Quelques jours après, une chose arriva, qui fut un sujet d'étonnement pour tout le monde, et qui fit croire aux plus incrédules que le cardinal était bien convaincu de sa fin prochaine. Son eminence appela près d'elle monsieur, frère du roi, et de la main à la main fit cadeau de

cinquante mille écus. La joie de son altesse royale qui grâce à l'avarice du premier ministre n'avait jamais possédé trois mille livres à la fois, ne saurait trouver d'expression dans notre langue; le jeune homme sauta au cou du cardinal, l'embrassa d'effusion, et sortit tout courant.

"'Ah!' dit en soupirant Mazarin, 'je voudrais qu'il m'en coûtât quatre millions et avoir encore le cœur assez jeune pour éprouver une joie pareille.'"

But never more on earth was that circumventing and astute cardinal to experience a similar satisfaction to that of the young prince who, at the eleventh hour only, he had had the resolution and the justice to gratify by affecting to present him with that money which never ought to have been withheld from him—for, with Mazarin, all joy of heart was indeed past—with him, life was but the shadow at which he still grasped—and death the substance which he still despised; for his days were numbered, his minutes were told, and shortly, very shortly, to terminate in dread and in terror.

With the freshness of nature withered by feverish and debasing intrigue; with the lustre of the soul tarnished and mildewed by the corruption of selfishness; and the mind shaken and demoralised by the diabolic perversion of scepticism; he was shortly, very shortly, destined to prove the fallacy of his daring schemes of enduring aggrandisement—his anticipations of enduring influence—he was shortly, very shortly, to prove, as an immutable destiny indeed, that all his accumulated riches (and how vast they were!)—all his hoarded treasures (and how gorgeous they were!)—could not avail him aught in the destitution of dissolution; that as "he had come naked into the world, so naked must he go hence;" that in struggling to obtain wealth and power disingenuously, he had neglected to strive after those superior possessions which alone are of real value, when the empty honours which ennoble here cease to ennoble hereafter.

Well then might he sigh—sigh with envy, sigh with hopelessness—at witnessing the almost indecent exultation of the young man (who, forgetting that it was from the hand of Death, as it were, that he received the gift which so excited his admiration, as to prevent him having the command over his emotions, so as to enable him to conceal his very extravagant delight from the expiring and tardy donor), as he was but too conscious that all terrestrial pleasures were at an end for him, and that those beyond the grave durst only to be expected with a misgiving apprehension; and then, not from desert, but from the illimitable extent of Almighty grace and mercy.

And in how few years, in his turn, was that inconsiderate young prince to lose the buoyancy of spirit, the lightness of heart, the playfulness of fancy, and the sanguineness of being, which rendered that gift so surpassingly inestimable to him! How soon, in his turn, was he, too, to feel that as youth abandons us, so does joy forsake us; such joy as makes the heart proud in the audacity of its strength, and swells the bosom with the upheavings of arrogant immunity from suffering or from sorrow; the joy, in fact, of YOUTH; to sigh, as Mazarin sighed, with the envy, which yet awakens no ENVY, at the heedless demonstration, never, never more to be his!

Let us, for a moment, imagine that wretched and regretful Mazarin, as he is so vividly depicted by Dumas—let us imagine him bowed down, not by age, but anxieties, and macerated, not by years, but chagrins, stealing surreptitiously from a sick-bed, from a death-bed, dragging his attenuated frame with difficulty from chair to chair to take a last fond farewell of the gods of his idolatry, to gloat over for the last time, to gaze for the last time on those valuables which he admitted he had acquired at the most fearful cost! Let us imagine him, after this final and pathetic adieu, left to his own reflections, turning his thoughts within himself, and recoiling from the leprosy clinging to his soul, and marvelling where he should find the purifying Jordan to cleanse it from its iniquity!

Is it not amazing—oh! is it not incomprehensible, that the soul, so fully aware of its ultimate immortality as to acknowledge in such an examination all the enormity of its past turpitude, should still covet those frail possessions, those merest trifles, those very "stocks and stones, the works of men's hands," so as to deplore in the bitterness of the spirit the separation from the insensate baubles which have seduced it from its allegiance to its Creator—which have destroyed its hopes in its Creator—which cannot sympathise with the regret which they occasion—which cannot retard the death whose sharpest agony they occasion? Yet a Paul may preach, a Paul may plant, an Apollos may prune, an Apollos may water, and the soil yet refuse its increase of wisdom; for men still continue in error, men will still continue to add "field to field and house to house"—still continue to "heap up riches, unknowing who shall gather them." And all the more piercingly to barb the arrow of the mighty archer, whose aim never misses its object!

Such was the opinion of Dr. Johnson, such was the reproving opinion of Dr. Johnson, when he exclaimed to the vain-glorious, the ostentatious Garrick, who in the triumph of more fortuitous success boastfully exhibited his elegant mansion, his magnificent grounds, to the eminent but struggling scholar: "Ah! David, David, these are the things which make a death-bed terrible!" They *might* to Garrick, they *did* to Mazarin; but it was not "these things," these frivolous things, which made the death-bed of the Countess of Nottingham terrible! It was a darker and a direr remorse, which heightened its natural horrors and magnified its natural fears—it was the ghastly skeleton of compunction haunting the dim closet of the heart, like a fiend of threatening, for the treacherous part which she had played towards the too-confiding and unfortunate Earl of Essex—it was for the concealment of his last appeal to the clemency of his relenting sovereign—it was for the withholding of that ring, which was bestowed on him by his attached sovereign as a pledge of placability, should he ever seriously offend so as to require such an intercessor, and which, when she was expiring, seemed to encircle her whole being as with a girdle of fire, burning even to the innermost centre of her agonised soul!

It was not "these things"—these frivolous things—which made the death-bed of the indignant and resentful queen, whom she had so cruelly deceived, terrible—it was the fatal discovery that, had that faithless creature fulfilled her mission righteously, she should have been spared the

assassination of him whose timeless death accelerated her own! It was, in truth, the mortal spite of knowing that he had died supposing her unwilling to save him!

What must have been the insane rage of the frantic Elizabeth, when she ruthlessly shook that expiring and contrite woman with all the violence of pitiless and futile exasperation? What must have been her awful and unmitigated anger, when she declared to that weeping supplicant for her mercy, "that God might pardon her, but that she never could?"

What must have been her mental tortures when, for ten days and nights, she lay, like one possessed with a demon, writhing on the floor of her palace, "refusing to be comforted because *he* was not?"

Did she once then think—that implacable Elizabeth—in the midst of her unutterable anguish, that this world was fast failing her? that her power to pardon would soon cease? that her dignity would soon be as nought? that ere long she would have to stand meaner than the meanest of her subjects, who was clothed in a more regal righteousness, before the "King of Kings," to be reminded of her impious denunciation against that penitent countess? to be reminded that only as she had forgiven those who had trespassed against her, could she hope for pardon for her own trespasses against Heaven?

Did she once then think, that in a moment of time she should look upon her victim, her deluder, and her God? She gave no sign of such salutary thoughts—no outward and visible sign—yet He who readeth the heart might have perceived those stimulating thoughts—stimulating to humble and holy faith, there!

It were easy to enlarge this list of human weaknesses—human mistakes—human turpitudes—but the theme is too painful for that "charity which hopeth all things, which vaunteth not itself," to expatiate more fully upon, without the mind becoming depressed by the idea of the folly and blindness which perverts, and which misleads, those originally endowed by Omniscience, with that High Intelligence which made men only "a little lower than the angels," to ultimately attain to an equal glory with them!—without the mind becoming depressed by the idea that that same folly and blindness will continue to pervert and mislead those endowed with that High Intelligence—ay! so long as the world endures!—without the mind becoming depressed by the idea that we ourselves, originally as endowed with that High Intelligence, may be unwittingly as blind and as perverted!—without the mind becoming depressed by the idea that, so far from man lamenting the loss of his youth here, he ought to lament not having lost it ere he reached to his sin-stained manhood; he ought to lament that he had not been benignly "taken from the evil to come," before its familiarity rendered it scarcely detestable; he ought to lament that he was not amongst the elected few who, in dying young, are of the most chosen and the most loved of the Lord!

A FEW CHAPTERS ON THE WORKING CLASSES.

No. III.—Recreation.

BY E. P. ROWSELL, ESQ.

The greater portion of our article on the Education of the Working Classes was devoted to considering the oft-asserted essentiality of combining religious with secular instruction; the remarks which we shall now make on the Recreation of the Masses will be mainly directed to the question as to the legitimacy and propriety of seeking such recreation on Sundays. It is not with any feeling of gratification that we enter on these difficult and frequently-disputed points, neither have we any conceited notion that we can submit concerning them any new views or new arguments, but the heading of this series of articles is "A Few Chapters on the Working Classes," and the design is, as before expressed, to induce the readers of this periodical to turn their thoughts kindly to matters affecting the welfare of tens of thousands of brothers and sisters who are continually toiling and slaving for a bare subsistence, and from whom, as a great body, come, nevertheless, no repinings, who are contented to live in poverty, and look forward to filling in the end a humble grave with calmness and resignation. This, then, being our object, we by no means wish to shirk the more troublesome portions of the task we have set ourselves. If we have nothing new to say, let us repeat that already uttered; it may have escaped notice elsewhere, it may obtain perusal and consideration here. The inducement may be strong to pen that which would be more lively, more attractive; let us crush the inclination, and with an effort (we grant with an effort) plod onwards in the path we have marked out, with the consolation of feeling that there is something more noble in a weary journey, having a distinct and useful purpose, than there is in all the dancing and gambolling on the green.

Now we do not think there can be the smallest degree of doubt that Sunday was designed to be, and should be, a day not simply of rest, but a day during which the Creator should receive that homage and humble, earnest consideration, which, without being guilty of any impiety, large numbers of the world's inhabitants have not given during the past week. If we can bestow but so little of our time during six days to thought of the master mind which conceived, the master hand which fashioned, the mighty love which redeemed us, surely it is not asking much, surely it is requiring that which we should most gladly and most cheerfully render—that on the seventh day the pent-up prayer and praise should be heard, and the due worship be freely and fully poured forth. The inclination of every God-fearing person must be perfectly in accordance with the Bible command on this head. The requirement to keep one day out of seven holy, chimes so completely with our natural tendency, is such a reasonable command (if we may use the expression), is so fraught with good to us in every way, both as regards our temporal and eternal well-being, that we can scarcely believe any but the vilest of the vile would refuse to recognise the Sabbath, or speak or think of it with other emotions than those of thankfulness and joy.

It will be readily understood, then, from these remarks, that we look with a very jealous eye at excuses for the non-observance of the Sabbath. We shall, indeed, presently come to the consideration whether, under certain circumstances, that which is ordinarily described as pleasure may not be enjoyed on the Sabbath to the putting aside the partaking in public worship; but we feel that, unfortunately, there is a disposition stronger now than ever not to alter these exceptional circumstances and thus legitimately remove the evil, but rather to plead them as excuse for tenfold the relaxation which, in reason, they would justify. We shall advocate the cause of the poor man in this matter; we will utterly condemn any carelessness or disregard on the part of the rich in regard to the due keeping the Sabbath-day. We pass a West-end church or chapel. We see standing at the doors a long row of splendid carriages, their miserably lazy owners being indisposed to walk half a mile to or from a place of worship, while they may walk six half miles for mere gratification. And the conduct of too many of the middle classes in the matter of Sunday observance cannot be pleasurably regarded. The monster train which takes from the crowded city the poor man, who literally has worked from morning till night during the six previous days, into green fields and fresh air, carries also the comparatively wealthy man, who could have gone, but did not care to go, on another day. Oh shame on ye who, without excuse, abominably desecrate the Sabbath, who would howl at and hunt down the vendor on that day of some cheap provision in a poor neighbourhood, but would calmly and complacently offer ten thousand times worse insult to the Sabbath with not one hundredth part of the excuse. Hypocrisy, hypocrisy—the old, old curse—is vigorous still, and powerful as in days gone by.

Now, however, arises the question—does the Bible permit, do those portions of it referring to the Sunday bear, when viewed soberly and dispassionately, the interpretation that a certain relaxation of the strict rule to keep the Sabbath-day holy, *is* allowable under particular circumstances? It appears to us that such is the case. In a former article in this Magazine, entitled "Recreation on Sundays," we dwelt on this point at some length. The rule, the general injunction is absolute—and it is perfectly in accordance with our reason. But our Saviour healed the sick man on the Sabbath-day, and followed up the miracle by a series of remarks which do seem to intimate, with much clearness, that, under the pressure of vehement requirement, the rule as to the ordinary observance of the Sabbath may be departed from.

Now the question is, whether the need of the poor artisan or labourer to go forth on the Sunday into the fields far away from the noisome city wherein he works incessantly for bread for his family can be termed "a vehement requirement?" We think that it justly may be. We wish, indeed, it were otherwise. We wish the man had a giant's strength which would *not* break down; we wish that by some marvellous process the air of the court or alley might be purified, so that the cheeks of his wife and children would *not* grow pale, and their bodily powers would *not* wane. But, unfortunately, the deteriorating process can be arrested in one way. The fresh air on the Sunday will to an extent counteract the ill effect of the foul air in the week days, the cheerfulness engendered by the Sunday trip will do something towards smoothing the

wrinkles which care and sorrow had wrought during the week just concluded. Attendance at church morning and evening might have had the effect of calming the mind (may we never speak lightly or irreverently of the benefits of public worship!), but the circulation would not have been quickened, the limbs not strengthened, the lungs would not have been brought into healthier play, the heart's action (rendered dull and feeble by the fatigue of the six days' labour concluded) would not have received any cheerful acceleration. We are not to expect miracles in these days. The air inside the church in a court is much the same air as that which is in the houses in the court—that is to say, it is wretchedly unwholesome; the advantage of sitting in a church, as far as the body is concerned, is no more than that of sitting in a gin palace; these things are the results of fixed laws, and cannot be interfered with.

We are not taking the case of the poor man who is a thorough reprobate. If he be a man of this class, beyond all question we shall do him a service by getting him away from the immediate neighbourhood of his home; for if he be disposed to loiter through the Sunday, we may be sure his shufflings will be in the direction of the gin shop, and his gratification the becoming partially or wholly intoxicated, in the company of associates equally idle and disreputable as himself. But we are viewing the case of the really respectable and religious working man, whose inclination would be to go to church with his wife and family; and we are considering whether this man can justify himself if it appear that, notwithstanding his religious professions, he may frequently be seen in the Sunday monster train when the church bells are calling him to prayer and praise. And we do say very strongly, that if this poor man can prove to us (and we should think that there is scarcely a working man in London who could *not* prove to us) that not only himself, but those dependent upon him, are literally pining for fresh air—really gasping for it, in a manner which we more favoured individuals cannot conceive—that their minds and bodies alike are faded and depressed—that life, without any recreation, is really becoming burdensome to them—that without a fresh stock of health gathered on the Sunday, the doctor will be needed on the Monday; and if the doctor, then quickly the relieving officer; and if the relieving officer, then by-and-by the workhouse; the workhouse bringing humiliation, and suffering, and early graves,—if all these gloomy contingencies be arrayed before our mind's eye as, to say the least, the very likely consequences of keeping the Sabbath-day holy in the manner in which some would require it to be kept, we shall confess we shall view the monster train with a smile, and the longer it be the more we shall rejoice.

And now another point. Is it a mere delusion—is it a bright fancy, but only a fancy—that there is something in the clear blue sky, something in the waving trees, in the rich green sward, something in the singing of birds, something in the glorious beams of the orb of day, calculated to speak sweet words of life and light, hope and faith, kindness and genial feeling, to the soul of the poor overtasked artisan, who, on this one day out of seven, is free from his shackles? It is a hard heart which can look on beauteous scenery, whether in summer or winter, and not be touched. The vast blue expanse above me, what thoughts does it bring into my mind?—thoughts of those who so well I knew, so

fondly I loved, when they were here with me, and we walked together. The night of death came early to some, and they lie in moss-covered graves in the churchyard. Others were old and worn when the summons came, and they laid them down to their long last slumber in this world; their tombs are in the great city, and busy life is constantly about them. Another reposes in the deep sea. And these broad heavens, what do they say to me regarding dear friends dead? They say they yet live—in that world whose mighty mystery remains as it existed when time began *they live;* together with countless generations they have been gathered into that amazing region beyond the thin veil on which my eye now rests. Thoughts akin to these may enter the mind of the well-disposed working man. The man who makes your shoes, dear reader, in a dark alley, has, strange to say, a nature something similar to your own, and in bright moments thoughts somehow steal in very beautiful and very touching in their essence, though any attempt to express them might be rough and awkward. We have one common Father, who can and does, through varied media, speak of Himself equally to the unlettered mechanic as to the learned theologian or the deeply-read divine. The elaborate discourse from the pulpit will little profit the wearied and, unfortunately, perhaps, inattentive artisan; the shining of the bright sun, the waving of the golden corn, the glistening of waters, the tide of melody poured from the thick woods, may, combined, touch the heart—soften and subdue it in a matter utterly beyond the reach of any other influence. So that though it may sound far-fetched, that piety may be taught the working man by taking him into the country and bidding him view its beauties, yet is our faith earnest that he must indeed be sadly hardened and depraved if he return in the evening weary and heavy-laden as in the morning—if he return *not* with a lighter and a better heart, a worthier, stronger spirit to battle with the evils, and overcome the vices, which beset his path.

If, then, it be the case that the monster Sunday train, by taking from the crowded city the hopelessly debauched, at least takes them from renewed debauchery, and so engages them that unlawful indulgence to anything like the extent which would occur at home is quite impracticable; and if it be also the case that the right-minded and sound-thinking mechanic may also, with his family, travel by the monster train on the Sunday, and while renovating his bodily energies, receive into his heart lessons as pure and as holy as any he would listen to at church, we cannot bring ourselves to hinder the Sunday recreation—we shall rather promote it, and witness it with pleasure.

Let us, however, implant this in the hearts of our working classes, that on this great day they preserve within them the spirit with which it should be so closely associated—the spirit which will make them humble, thankful, hopeful—the spirit which will render every spot a sanctuary, the hill-side, the sea-shore, the thick wood—ay, as much as the noblest cathedral which man ever reared.

We can do little more than glance at the general question of the recreation of the working classes. Any lengthened dissertation, indeed, were quite needless, for certainly at this time there is abundant display of sound sense and benevolent activity to bring within the reach of the masses that combination of amusement and instruction which not long

since was almost confined to the middle and higher ranks. That which we have to bear in mind when catering for the amusement of the working man is, that that will be most useful and most entertaining to him which has some connexion, however remote, with things more or less within his knowledge. We must confess we do not see much good in "great globes" to the working man, or learned lectures on chemistry. But now a steam-engine a working man has seen often; and he has a friend on one of the railways who has given him a rough notion of it. He would like to know more; then by all means let us teach him. He has looked at the electric telegraph and wondered; he has been over a ship and marvelled; he has read with astonishment accounts of Australia—he is not sure whether he shall not try to go there, and would be glad to hear something about emigration;—these, and an immense number of other subjects, possess interest to the working man, and we should improve and gratify him by imparting information thereon.

How much is to be done! What a field is open to those who have the will and the power to fight. But we want not the slaughter and the carnage. The gaping wounds, the bloody weapons—shut them from our sight. We cry, indeed, "to the battle"—we cry aloud for victory; but our battle is a battle against ignorance and sorrow—the victory which we seek is the victory of knowledge and refinement.

HEREWARD OF BRUNNE.

XII.

Soon as the abbess returned, Ediva fulfilled her promise made to Githa, by asking permission for her to communicate with Sweene.

"Methought it strange," replied the lady; "nor could I account for the distraught action of the young man thou namest Sweene, when at the gate. Twice did I give mine orders for his departure, yet the while did he remain with eyes wandering from stone to window, and from basement unto turret, as though seeking earnestly for some object he could not find; then did I repeat my words with somewhat greater emphasis, upon which he turned; obeying—though with a sigh and a disconsolate look. The cause is now revealed. For thy request, maiden, it would ill beseem one but too well acquainted with grief to refuse thee means whereby thou mayest glean tidings of thy slain father; yet, as it appears, there have been some love passages between thee and the youth thou wouldst speak with, it behoves me, as the guardian of this sanctuary, to take heed lest scandal—ever ready to defame that which is set apart for holy uses—breathe its venom on us. This then to prevent, sister Genevieve—one strict in the observance of order and sobriety—shall accompany thee to the falconer's dwelling, and stay at thy side till the end, that the sisterhood be not defamed before the world."

This harangue was listened to respectfully by Githa, who, however, gave a rueful look at her mistress on hearing the condition annexed to her being allowed the desired interview. But there was no appeal to be made, for the daughter of Godwin possessed with the blood of her great sire some of his regal spirit, which in her was none the less resistless that it was enunciated in calm even tones, accompanied with a gentle eye. Sister Genevieve was therefore made acquainted with the will of her superior, which she received with all ungraciousness, and obeyed unwillingly.

"And what important errand is it," began the recluse, ere they had gone many steps in the direction of the falconer's house—"what important errand is it, I pray, that sends you prancing o'er the fields at this time of the day, and forcing me leave my aves to wait upon you?"

"Indeed, sister Genevieve," replied Githa, "it was no wish of mine to have disturbed ye. I was no whit to blame, and gladly would have had ye enjoy your usual sleep in the afternoon instead."

"Sleep!" echoed the nun, sharply. "And think you that I, who every day after the noon refection repeat o'er my rosary, have either time or inclination to indulge a taste so gross as sleep?"

"I did mistake, then," rejoined Githa; "for passing lately by your cell, I heard a sound loud and regular as through the nose, and peeping in, saw you, as I thought,—sinful mortal that I was!—fast asleep. The fact, however, must have been, that you were in holy meditation merely; and that your head piously nodded off each prayer; for in the ardour of your devotion the beads you should have told had fallen from your fingers, and lay unregarded at your side."

"'Tis clear, damsel," cried the nun, angrily, "that your idle disposition hath led you to neglect you own duties to pry into mine."

"Be that as it may," replied Githa, "much do I regret the inconvenience you are put to in coming with me, whether it prevents your vigil, or enjoying that which is natural to drowsiness."

"I believe you, damsel," said sister Genevieve—"I well believe you would fain waive my presence here. Little do either my years or gravity suit your liking. I, alas! neither dance nor sing light songs, trifle with the precious hours given us for better uses, or laugh with empty mirth at jests which have nor aim nor end, save to feed vanity and idleness of spirit."

"Of all such merry inclinations freely do I absolve ye," answered Githa. "Yet do I heartily wish, sister Genevieve, that, on the present occasion, you would quicken your pace a little, unless by so doing it would seem unto your gravity that the speed partook of levity."

"Would you had the aches and pains I have to bear from these November fogs!" rejoined the nun, spitefully, "then would you know what 'tis to be exposed to their griping power. I marvel that our holy mother hath forgot my poor limbs are yet under the blessed influence of the ointment her own hands laid on them. But 'tis fit! 'tis just! wherefore should one so worthless in esteem as I am, be remembered?"

"True," murmured Githa; "save it were to put you out of remembrance."

"What sayst? ah!" returned the recluse, with a sharp look at her

companion. "Yet wherefore should I ask, when the answer can profit so little, or perhaps serve only to drive the thorn in my flesh to the quick? It is enough that I must submit to the torture added through exposure to this rheumy air."

"I will gladly tend you if you be sick; do but excuse the innocent cause of your coming hither. Let us be friends, sister Genevieve; the more so, since, whether we like it or not, our lot is cast together."

"Friends!" echoed the nun; "friendly with one who jeers at my person, and whom I have detected aping my gait, and making worse my natural defects! Never. If my temper be not of the sweetest, you have steeped it in wormwood, and must not look to find it other than bitter. Have you not, I say, done all manner of mischievous tricks, which from time to time have made Genevieve the laughing-stock of the whole sisterhood?"

It might be that Githa's conscience slightly pricked her as the foregoing charges were enumerated against her, for she at first looked grave; but as the nun finished the recital, it seemed that the recollection of some of her comic pranks was too much for the restraint of her risible muscles, and she burst into a hearty fit of laughter.

"Mighty well—'tis mighty well," cried the offended sister Genevieve. "Grace is as far from ye as order and decency."

"And yet," said Githa, recovering herself—"and yet no word or thing said or done by me has been in malice, and might easily have been forgiven ere the laugh was well over; if not, at least you have had full revenge for the slight wrong done you; for how often have you disgraced me with the abbess by reporting my little motes of faults for beams. Then came the penance—weak diet, and, what was worse, the being mewed up for two days together within yonder walls; where, when I sought fresh air even in the cloisters, that same air ever fanned my cheek slow, heavy, and cold, damping my heart."

"What I have reported to the lady abbess," returned the sister, unmollified, "has been in consequence of actions so unbecoming, that not to have informed her would have made me partaker in the guilt. Besides, damsel, your punishments have been too light, and seem, alas! rather to have hardened you in depravity than had a chastening effect."

"That the punishments were not severer," rejoined Githa, "certainly was no fault of yours. You can charge yourself with no undue leniency towards me; and, in return, whene'er the happy day comes I quit this place, I shall not much regret leaving behind sister Genevieve."

"A happy day, indeed, when it comes!" cried the nun. "A day joyful as jubilee that on which thou leavest our peaceful dwelling. But enough. Yonder stands the abode of Ives the falconer; now, ere we enter therein, let me warn thee, maiden, that as perforce I must be present at thine interview with this young man—let me warn thee, I say, that there be no light word to pollute mine ear, no action which may scandalise my vision, no kisses—for they are lewd—and no enticing looks, which are apt to steal the thoughts into impure channels."

"There can be no true Saxon blood in those veins," exclaimed Githa, with flashing eye, "or had you known and felt that a Saxon maiden's honour is safest in her free charge. But why speak I thus to one whom,

if report be true, granted in her youth more freedom to her lover than beseemed her to do?"

"What mean you, damsel?" inquired the nun, turning pale with anger.

"Simply, that your name should be sister Magdalene, not Genevieve."

The recluse replied not, for she appeared struck dumb with surprise at the revelation of a phase in her former life being thus unexpectedly announced: nor had she time to recover herself, for at the moment a noble hound suddenly appeared from among some brushwood, and bounding towards the females directed the attention of both.

"Good Lightfoot—noble fellow!" cried Githa, forgetting alike her anger and the cause of it, as she caressed the dog, who was joyously careering about her with the air of an intimate acquaintance. "Trusty friend! there is ever good-will with thee."

"Horrible beast!" exclaimed sister Genevieve, drawing back. "Let him not come near me. Of all living things I hate dogs and cats—that is" (correcting herself) "with hate, if it must so be called, such as a Christian may have who has devoted herself to the service of the holy Saint Winifred. Bah! out of my sight, thou monster."

The last words, accompanied with corresponding action, was addressed to the dog, who appeared to understand fully its import and the feeling prompting it, as he replied with a short snarl, revealing as he did so a portentous set of teeth; then satisfied with that demonstration, resumed his gambols with Githa, who received them with an arch smile, betraying a touch of weak vanity at the unmistakable way with which he showed his preference.

"Aha! Lightfoot hath nothing of the courtier in him," exclaimed a hearty good-humoured voice; and the speaker issued from behind an adjacent brake, in the person of a bluff but well-looking man about forty years of age. He had a hawk upon his wrist, and was otherwise accoutred in all points like a falconer. "Thou hast thy likes and dislikes," he added, "just as a mortal hath, but art more honest in the showing of them. Fie on thee, Lightfoot. What! no more respect paid to the holy sister? Heed him not, sister Genevieve; take no exceptions at him, for 'tis but his dislike at stone walls and cloister makes him distrust all that dwell therein."

"Not so, Ives, either," rejoined Githa; "I live among the cloisters, and yet Lightfoot hates me not."

"Right, wench," replied Ives, laughing. "But he knows thee for a wild thing, that loves to shake the dew from the heather as well as himself."

"Enough—nay, more than enough, of this idle talk," interrupted the nun, peevishly; "we are on our way to thine abode, Ives, and would not be detained."

"Nor shall ye be, holy sister," the falconer assured her. "Keep the broad path, and we will meet you at the porch-door; meanwhile, I would fain show Githa a plover's nest which is here at hand."

Then, without waiting for a permission he knew was not likely to be granted, the falconer strode away, followed blithely by the young maiden.

"A plover's nest in November," said she, laughing; "methinks, Ives, there is little to interest in such a sight."

"Hush! hush!" rejoined Ives. "I did it but to say my say out of hearing of yonder harridan. Though, first of all, what hast thou been saying to her which has brought the blue spot upon her sanctimonious nose, and the red spot upon your bonny cheek?"

"She provoked me," answered Githa, "and I reminded her of some of her past deeds."

"Wheugh!" whistled the falconer. "Surely not her ancient wooings with Willibald! Why, wench, she will hold a grudge to thee for life."

"I care not."

"Pish! but it was not wise," rejoined Ives. "I will tell thee no more gossip, for 'tis clear a secret to a woman is like barm in a cask; an it cannot come out o' the bung it will burst the staves."

"Fear not; I named no names, and thou art safe. For me, nought stronger than a padlock could have kept my lips close. She would provoke a saint, speaking out her malice neither fast nor slow, but ever in one low tone, enough to make one's blood cold."

"Well if mischief come not of thy prating," said Ives. "Stagnant water is best not stirred up; and I know sister Genevieve of old, she forgives not, nor does she forget till she pays off all scores of an affront. But I have lured thee hither to speak of another subject than sister Genevieve. What it is to have an honest open countenance!" and as the falconer made the reflection, his face assumed an air of much self-satisfaction as he regarded Githa significantly.

"Truly it is a good thing," remarked the maiden. "But I pray thee, Ives, what new virtues hast thou found in it?"

"Why, the lad Sweene saw me," continued Ives, in the same tone—"saw that he could trust me; and lo! after a two hours' acquaintance, hath he told me the whole story of his liking for thee, and thine for him."

"Mine for him!" repeated Githa.

"Ay, wench; the whole of it," rejoined the falconer. "But what made him the more ready to put confidence in me was, that he plainly saw I was a man of skilful devices, and might help him to gain a sight of thee at odd times."

"Why, Ives, even without thy help that may be done," answered Githa. "I have even the lady abbess's own permission for him to see me this day."

"Ay, but such permits will be rare I trow," rejoined Ives. "Trust me, ye will meet not once 'tween December and May an ye accept not my good offices. Well for ye, lady-kin mine, that there is a friend at hand able and willing to assist ye. Sweene has already, and gladly, put himself under my guidance in the matter."

"He knows thee not, Ives," rejoined Githa, archly. "Knows not how often thy schemes recoil on thine own head. Dost thou remember thy last exploit, the visit to the herdsman's daughter? Ah! Ives."

"Pho, pho! the failure was no fault of mine," answered the falconer. "Did I not explain it to thee? How that the scheme was excellent—in fact, that it could not fail?"

"I know not," said Githa; "but if a broken head is to be the proof of success——"

"Come, come, no more," interrupted Ives. "Nothing was ever better framed; and I could prove it to thee, but that I see yon cursed nun—Saint Winifred forgive me!—has set her fishy eyes upon us, and seems vastly inclined to come over and join us. Farewell, wench; I must leave thee to describe the plover's nest to sister Genevieve. Ho! ho! Humph!" checking his merriment as he again saw the severely critical eye of the recluse fixed upon them. "Who would believe that a man could laugh under such a frosty influence as the holy sister has fixed in her countenance!"

Shrugging his shoulders, the burly falconer whistled to his dog Lightfoot and moved away, while Githa hastened to join sister Genevieve.

"Is this conduct of thine seemly, damsel?" said the nun, as they entered Ives's habitation—a commodious and substantial building. "Fie on thee to be skipping hither and thither in the mere wantonness of strength and activity. A creature of charity, and one well-disposed, would rather have stayed to aid my weak steps, but—thank Heaven!—I still can move without thy help; though the day may come yet when thine own failings shall make thee feel for the infirmities of others."

Githa had no time for reply, for stepping into an apartment pointed out by a tidy little maiden of the house, Sweene was discovered busily repairing an old cross-bow. His back was partially turned to the new comers, so that he saw them not. The work on which he was engaged seemed not to his liking, or his temper was not so equable as was his wont, for he threw the weapon aside, exclaiming, "'Tis not worth the mending, or my hands have lost their skill. Everything goes across. As for Githa, I might as well have been at the Land's End to get a sight of her. It's my belief she cares not a jot for me, or she had given some token of her seeing me as we stood at the gate of the nunnery e'en now. No. She cares not for me, for had she loved as I do, she had felt of herself that Sweene had been at hand. It needs not a score of messengers to tell the when, where, and how a beloved object comes nigh. No, no. If my friend the falconer were to doubly hoodwink me, I could have told had Githa been present."

"The clear sight of some people is very marvellous," said Githa, putting her hand on his shoulder.

Sweene started up with an exclamation of joy at the sound of her voice, and turning round, was about to pay more than a mere formal salutation to his mistress, when his ardour was checked by the interposition of sister Genevieve's skeleton-like hand and arm, and his eye rested on her forbidding aspect.

To his look of inquiry Githa answered, "It is so ordered that this holy sister, by name Genevieve, shall be present at our parley, the lady abbess not having confidence, Sweene, in thy discretion."

"Plague on it," muttered Sweene. "Yet surely," he added aloud, "the holy sister may freely give us leave to speak without her hearing, as the subject can in no way give her interest."

"As you please," replied the nun, bridling. "The saints forbid I should heed your idle converse. That ye wish me far from ye I know;

the vain ones of the earth ever abhor those near them that check with a grave observation their frivolous pursuits. What you have to say, young man, say briefly, that we may be gone."

She then retired to a corner of the room, where she did not fail, however, to watch the motions of the young couple, who, already forgetting her presence, were engaged in earnest converse. Sweene first related where and how he had discovered the body of Githa's father.

"And saw you him before that dreadful fight took place?" she then asked.

"Yes," replied the young man. "He came the night before to the tent where I was lodged;—gave his blessing to thyself and me, lest, as he said, it might be wanting at our marriage feast, and bade me swear to tend thee well and kindly should he fall in the battle."

"I have already wept for him as dead. Where didst thou bury him, Sweene?"

Sweene was silent.

"Thou couldst not surely leave his limbs to be torn by wolves and crows?"

The young man still hesitated, debating with himself how he should answer, so as to convince Githa that he had no choice but to leave the corpse as he found it.

"Speak, Sweene," repeated the maiden, turning her look full and inquiringly upon him.

"Githa, we had no leisure to remove the body."

"No leisure! leisure! what! No leisure to remove from spoil and injury the remains of him from whose lips the blessing on you had scarce died away!"

"Hear me, Githa, and then judge——," began her lover.

"Thou, oh my poor father," interrupted the maiden, "wouldst not have left a friend exposed—unburied, having no—leisure."

"I tell thee, Githa——"

"Nay, peace, peace. This may not be explained away. Seek not to excuse that which was not done, but though the coldness of thy heart——"

"You are unjust," exclaimed the young man, bitterly. "I swear that had my life only been in jeopardy that night, the sun had never shone upon your father's bones. Nay, you must hear me," he added, as Githa was about to speak, looking half repentant at the hastiness of her late anger. "We were sent that night to save the living; to rescue the young Wilstan from a lingering death; wading through scenes unsightly, and amid dangers which every moment perilled our lives. Was it a time, then, for delay? Yet would I had stayed behind and rather perished, than Githa had thought me faint of heart."

"Forgive me, Sweene," replied Githa, taking his hand. "Forgive me. Truly I was wrong ever to forget the goodness and gentleness of thy nature."

The young man replied not in words, but expressed his full forgiveness in a way quite as convincing, for, catching her in his arms, he imprinted on her lips several kisses, so suddenly and with such heartiness that the maiden had no power to resist, supposing she had been so disposed. At the sound sister Genevieve bounded into the middle of the room with an alacrity which for a moment forgot the pains of cramp or sciatica.

"Let us begone," she gasped; "begone instantly. The air is polluted. For thee, damsel, severe indeed shall be the penance to atone for this. Prepare thee for a Levitical punishment. Thou shalt sit spiritually in sackcloth and ashes; and the coarsest of food shall macerate thy dainty flesh. Holy Saint Winifred! what prayers—what aves, may propitiate thee!—Abomination of abominations! Faugh!"

"You now hear, Sweene," said Githa, ruefully, "what this folly of yours is likely to bring upon me."

"A thousand plagues!" muttered the young man. "Is it that the daughter of a Saxon, FOLK FREE and SACLESS, should be spoken to as one born of the meanest THREW?"

"But another word, sister Genevieve," said Githa, as the nun was about to advance and take her arm; "and that is, Sweene," turning to her lover, "to ask you to forget the hasty words I uttered just now. For my excuse, I have been somewhat tried of late. Habits that suit me not—dissensions where I sought them not—and grief for my poor father—all weighing on me, have, I fear, damaged my patience, and made my tongue petulant. Blame me not too harshly, but bear with me."

"Blame thee, Githa!" replied Sweene, his voice, usually deep and sonorous, becoming musically soft as a woman's. "Blame one who is my pride as well as joy!—one who accepts the love of a being rude and ignorant as poor Sweene! Why, Githa, when we were children no higher than my knee, thy thoughts and aims were ever higher than mine. In the stream, in the fields, and in the woods, thou sawest beauties I saw not till thou didst mark them to me. In the song of the bird, and in the grasshopper's chirp, thou didst hear music, while I heard none save when thy voice charmed the other sounds. And now they tell me thou canst read,—canst spell out those lines of strange words, and make them words such as we speak. It is a marvel to me; and yet, unworthy as I am, she that can do this I call mine own." As Githa silently enjoyed the luscious praise uttered in low earnestness by her lover, and dreamed upon the tones, she was suddenly awaked to a disagreeable consciousness of sister Genevieve's presence, as she started from the touch of the recluse's cold finger. "She awaits ye, holy sister," said Sweene, drawing his mistress away, however, while he whispered in her ear, "When wilt thou meet me, Githa, and where, to be freed of this she-cat? In the morning, or say at the latest on the morrow eve?"

"That you must even devise of your own skill," answered the maiden. "The more so, that of yourself you have shocked sister Genevieve, and thereby cut short our present meeting."

"Come, I will have no whisperings," put in the nun; "who can tell what plots your wicked natures may be hatching? Away with me at once, damsel, or dread the heaviest displeasure of our lady abbess, to whom I must recount the enormity I have had to witness."

There was nothing for it but to obey; and Githa, with another rueful look at Sweene, accompanied the ill-tempered devotee from the apartment; the young man regarding them much chagrined, till bethinking himself of his new friend—the falconer's promise to assist him in obtaining an uninterrupted interview with his mistress—he resolved to seek him out.

RHYME AND REASON.

By G. W. Thornbury.

THE JESTER'S SERMON.

"Gentle masters," said the Jester, "though November's chill and cold,
Yet it thatches hut and cabin with a roof of leafy gold;
Though it freeze the birds to branches, and for warmth and not for love
Sends the lark to seek through vapour the dim sun that shines above,
Yet beneath its snow and frostings lie concealed the buds of spring;—
Life and death have thin divisions, and the green woods soon shall ring.
Three foot deep the path is buried, and the nests are full of snow,
All the graves with white are shrouded, scarce the highest tombstones show.
Dead men in their coffins frozen; hot tears freeze on coffin plate;
Grave-worms, too, lie still and torpid, fretting 'mid the buried state.
Science may not bid the spring-tide sudden in the dark wood glow;
We've no spell with all our wisdom desert flowers to force to blow;
King or kaiser may go babble, from the sun their faces turn,
Still, if I've observed rightly, rain *will* wet and fire will burn.
We may bind the unseen spirits hiding in the earth and air;
Force them, like our unpaid vassals, to perform our meanest chair;
Drag them fettered, turn and wind them, passive as a broken steed;
Call them at the beck of finger to perform our will and deed;—
Yet we cannot make the spring flowers open to this winter sun,
Nor when all the brooks are frozen force them to the river run.
We may strut, and stare, and swagger, with the frown of a stage god,
Yet can we with all our science raise a daisy from the sod?
We can not with spell or glamour keep the dead leaves on the trees
When November calls them hoarsely with the shrill blast of the breeze.
We may hire us choirs of singers, eunuchs from dead Italy,
Yet for no crowned monarch's bidding soars the lark aloft in glee.
Monarchs may lie worn and sleepless, craving music all the night,
Yet the nightingale is silent, yielding nothing to his might;
And the owl will hoot unheeding in the palace gardens near,
And the dawn comes no whit quicker, though it might a monarch cheer."
Benedicite my masters, now the Jester's said his say,
Brother Francis speaks to-morrow, Brother Fool has preached to-day.

THE WIND.

I've seen the summer breeze grow to a storm,
Like Afrit in the old Arabian tale,
Waxing in wondrous growth, still high and higher,
Springing to life as swiftly as a fire:
A mighty spirit, born amid the gale,
A creature of no human shape or form,
No red-blood flowing through his branching veins;
Shapeless and blind, but with a voice of thunder
That laughs when the red clouds do split asunder,
And the blue lightning, like a heavy rain,
Pours flooding down, and when to rest again
The tempest sinks, doth hide him in the cave
Of ocean, and lost demons gaze and wonder
To hear him in the sea's deep dungeons rave.

THE SONG OF THE DRUNKEN MONK.

"O WOULD I had an abbot's thirst,
Albeit a simple monk;
Yet a bishop himself could scarce do more
Than every night get drunk."
"Brother Francis, this must not be:
You've dropped your red-leafed breviary."
"Hic—Jubilate—Domine."

"And if I had that mighty thirst
I would often drain a bowl,
For an empty cup doth seem to me
A body without a soul."
"Brother Francis, the litany
Is the other end of the breviary."
"Hic—Jubilate—Domine."

"I'd rather have a full, full cup,
Though of beechen wood it be,
Than an empty beaker all of gold,
And fashioned curiously."
"Brother Francis, 'tis not seemlie
To look upside down at the breviary."
"Hic—Jubilate—Domine."

"I know my psalter all by heart,
And the psalms I treasure up,
Yet I never look at an empty skull
But I think of an empty cup."
"Brother Francis, bend the knee,
And make the one response with me."
"Hic—Jubilate—Domine."

"'*Memento mori*,' trusty Frère,
Is a motto fit for thee;
But a wiser man than Solomon
Said '*Memento bibere*.'"
"Brother Francis, the Holy See
Must hear of this thy sin from me."
"Hic—Jubilate—Domine."

"If I am a saint and canonised,
As I *shall* be, I wot,
Build shrines for me in Burgundy,
Where wine fills many a pot."
"Brother Francis, I blush for thee,
Repeat this single Ave Marie."
"Hic—Jubilate—Domine."

"The first good miracle wrought by me,
If I had the power divine,
Would be to make this silver stream
Blush all at once to wine."
"Brother Francis, sinners be
Exposed to dreadful jeopardy."
"Hic—Jubilate—Domine."

"There would I bathe the livelong day,
As in a crimson lake,
In hopes with help of my brother saints
This quenchless thirst to slake."
"Brother Francis, why gramercy,
I'll tell the whole fraternity."
"Hic—Jubilate—Domine."

DUBLIN PUNNING.

BY MATTHEW LYNCH.

DUBLIN society has always been famed for its members being addicted to the practice of punning. And in consequence of so being characterised, my readers should not deem it as unsafe for persons entering without their previously having buttoned their pockets. To every species of witty indulgence in social life upon the part of those joining in it a grave interdict is offered by the vinegar-minded sober men of imperturbable seriousness; and in their presence an individual in society indulging in the practice of punning, would be frowned by them down to the deepest dungeon of their severest condemnation. Happily, Dublin society is almost quite free from those musty sages who are opposed to its members indulging in any species of witticisms. And if any such person should raise his bald-pated and stupid old head against punning in Dublin society, some lively Miss of it, possessed of a pair of eyes more destructive to the hearts of young men than a covey of Dublin sparrows on a rustic expedition amongst our suburban fields in autumn will prove to a crop of wheat growing in one of these, will dispel the icy influence of his moroseness by some witty expression of her condemnation of his endeavouring to convert convivial halls into churchyards. Punning is the most facile species of wit ready to the mind of the witty man in society, and in consequence we find him in it indulging in the oft-condemned practice. If by punning an individual can easily excite amusement in his social companions' minds, the practice must be a pleasing source to them of innocent pleasure, and giving a flow of happiness to the punster as well as to the listeners of his witty sallies in the domains of the pun. Puns excite laughter in society, and consequently their perpetration in it proves as advantageous to its members. Indulgence in laughter is the most potent clearer of bad feelings by individuals from their hearts. No bad man can indulge in a hearty laugh—that one which rings loudly out from the depth of the heart;—he may smile, give a hyænic laugh, and seem to hide in outward merriment the inner blackness of his heart. The ancient sage has remarked—"Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes, emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros;"—surely laughter with learning is equally powerful in softening the manners and removing the mental incapacities of men. In the sound of a loud laugh to man there is society; and its hearer feels in his mind and heart its cheerful and softening influence. It tells that a human being is nigh to him and possessed of a whole and kind heart, and in whom he may look upon as a friend. The nightly assassin could not heartily laugh—the man thirsting for revenge would be unable to smoothly indulge in laughter—or could the individual upon whose soul guilt pressed indulge in a deep-hearted laugh. Joy is the state of eternal bliss—mirth is its prototype on earth. The most virtuous of human kind are those in whom laughter is easiest excited. And children are quickly excited into indulgence in this exhibition of joyfulness of heart. Cæsar feared Cassius by reason of his not possessing the faculty of rightful laughing. Our people are always fearful of a dark man, as Cæsar wisely would be in his time. Our people always

associate cheerfulness with goodness of heart, as instanced in a commendation of our virtuous sovereign addressed to the writer by a young Irish girl, on the occasion of the Queen's visit to Dublin, in these words: "She liked her because she was agreeable like her mother." Pitt well said, "He would not give a fig for a man who could not talk nonsense;" and in so speaking, he meant no doubt as to persons indulging in conversation causitive of loud laughter. Laughter removes leanness and induces health. And mirth and wisdom are mentally associated in our minds. And the value to persons indulging in laughter has been well guaged by a writer in proclaiming that the most unprofitable day a man passes is that one in which he has not once laughed. Laughter is an indication of physical as well as mental health; and suffering from pain or grief will prevent our indulging in laughter, so punning being causitive of laughter is a practice commendable to men indulging in it. Humour seems to be more relished than wit in England, but, contrariwise, the Irish are more addicted to wit than humour. Wit is an advantageous accomplishment, being possessed by an individual in his mixing in private and public society:

> Wit a diamond brought
> And cut his bright way through.

Our Dublin citizens, in public and private life, are addicted to the practice of punning. No matter how serious may be the business a Dublin citizen is engaged in transacting, he will not refrain in its transaction from indulgence in punning. Even the lying-in-state of a corpse in Dublin protects not those around it from the hearing the pun being indulged in at the expense of the dead person. It is related of a citizen of Ireland's metropolis, on his wife's death, and at her *wake*, lying down beside her *waking* corpse, which though then silent yet in life contained a tongue—a perfect claeker, at the same time proclaiming to his friends around him in the funereal chamber, "that he would have one *quiet night* with her before she was buried." On another equally dismal occasion, a surviving wife of a Dublin husband thus punningly proclaimed to her *waking* friends around her in the chamber of death, in putting down the materials for causing a good fire lighting up in his presence—"he was always fond of a good fire, *fire everlasting* to his sowl." A barrister meeting another one in our metropolis, asked him—"Did he hear of his son's robbery?" when he, notwithstanding his melancholy query, facetiously inquired of him, "Who did he rob?" A pun's perpetration by a Dublin citizen will be a balm to a wounded feeling when no other application would be effective for its relief, as proved in the case of our venerable Lord Plunket, as related in that most interesting and amusing book of Charles Phillips's, "Curran and his Contemporaries," on his being much annoyed at Lord Campbell being thrust into the Irish chancellorship against his wishes by his old allies the Whigs, meeting a friend on the day that Lord Campbell was expected to reach Ireland, and which was a boisterous one, who endeavoured to console the chagrined ex-chancellor by proclaiming to him, as to Lord Campbell's appointment, "that he must be made sick of his promotion by his passage," when Lord Plunket facetiously rejoined, in saying, "Yes, but it won't make him throw up the *Seals*."

Our judicial bench is characterised by its members' *penchant* for

punning. Earl Norbury, as judge, was ever punning whilst sitting on the bench; and even on the most solemn occasions of his judicial life would the practice of punning, in a most unseemly way, not be relinquished by that most daring of political profligates. In a case in the Irish Court of Common Pleas, over which he presided as chief justice, in pronouncing judgment as to a "Writ of Right," his *penchant* for punning was thus plainly evinced in thus saying: "That it was quite insufficient for the demandant in a writ of right to say, 'we claimed by descent;' that would be a shrewd answer for a sweep who had got into your house by coming down the chimney: 'Pray, sir, how did you get into my house'—'I got in by descent.' *Facilis descensus averni;* and this would be an easy and sweeping way of getting in." This puffing judge, meeting a friend in Dublin, who related to him of his having shot a large number of hares in a recent sporting excursion, when his lordship facetiously proclaimed to him, with an irreverent exclamation, "that he must have been firing at a *wig*." An Englishman, an Irish official, in company with Norbury in Dublin, was describing how in England skaters made use of bladders in skating, for their protection against accidents in falling, when the facetious judge proclaimed to him, in comic-seriousness, "that was what they called *bletherumskate* in Ireland." Lord Norbury perceiving a coal-dray proceeding along a streetway in Dublin loaded with a single bag of coke, proclaimed as to its load—"*Coke* upon *Littleton*."

A late erudite Irish judge, a successor in the judicial chair of Lord Norbury, of punning and political notoriety, was steadily addicted to the practice of punning, and would be prouder of delivering from the bench a pun than a sound legal judgment. This eloquent judge, whilst accompanying a daughter of his, in walking through our metropolis, meeting with a friend, stopped to converse with him, and as he was just then retiring from a cattle show at the Dublin Society, their conversation was wholly engrossed by grazing topics; and in consequence of their verdant disquisitions, the friend of the judge apologised to his daughter for his uninteresting conversation upon topics so distasteful to her mind; when immediately the learned judge gainsayed his opinion of the non-interesting character of their conversation to his pretty daughter, by proclaiming —"Not at all, she is partial to *husbandry*." And this judge, being asked by a legal friend his opinion as to the capabilities of the Irish masters in Chancery, facetiously avoided giving any opinion respecting their *masterly* qualifications, by facetiously proclaiming to him that "he was no judge of the *old masters*."

Curran, the Erskine of our bar, was in the constant habit of punning in addressing Lord Clare, as chancellor, in our Chancery Court, whose disrelish of Curran was so intense as to cause by its continual display on his part the diminution of his professional emoluments to the amount of twenty thousand pounds, perceiving his playing with a dog beside him on the bench, in contempt for him, suddenly ceased addressing his lordship, when Lord Clare said to him, "Why don't you proceed, Mr. Curran?" And he immediately thus rejoined, saying, "I thought your *lordships* were in consultation!"

This great advocate, in walking in the neighbourhood of Dublin, in passing by the residence of a legal friend, saw a nurse with a child in her

arms, and a number of children around her, standing at the gate leading to it; he stopped at it, and inquired from her regarding his friend's wife's health, and as to the precise number of her children, and on being informed by this servant-maid of their number being thirteen, he facetiously observed: "Oh! a jury! and this (looking at the baby in her arms) is the crier of the court."

Lundy Foot, a successful tobacconist of the city of Dublin, the inventor and introducer to public sale of the famous Irish snuff named "Blackguard," on his being about, as it is termed in Dublin language, setting up a carriage, requested from Curran a motto for his vehicle, when Curran immediately supplied him with the Latin one of "*Quid rides?*" which being read as English, conveys a pun upon the tobacconist's calling. This was a like witticism to that of Lord Erskine, conveyed by him to the tea-merchant of London on his asking him for a motto for a particular tea-chest, when he immediately proposed for it to him the Latin phrase, "Tu doces!" which in translation conveyed a pun, "Thou *tea-chest!*"

Curran being informed by a friend regarding the weeping of a certain Irish judge in court, in denying the fact of his weeping, confessed "that though he did not weep, he certainly had *a drop in his eye;*" the pun is conveyed in the phrase "a drop in his eye," which is a cant phrase in Ireland expressive of an individual's inebriation. Curran being informed of a friend of his having swallowed a large quantity of medicine, punningly exclaimed to him of this person, "That his throat ought to be called Pill-lane." (Pill-lane is the Billingsgate of Dublin.) A friend of our great advocate meeting him in our metropolis who sported a new wig, absurdly asked him as to his perceiving anything ridiculous in it, when he facetiously proclaimed to him, "Nothing but the *head.*"

Even on the field of duel his *penchant* for punning would be visible in him, as appeared in his duel with Bob Egan, a notorious barrister of Curran's day of legal practice in Ireland; on fighting Bob having taken deliberate aim, and fired before his time at his antagonist, Curran, and missed him, he proclaimed to Curran as to his honour being satisfied, and was leaving the ground, when immediately Curran facetiously called out to him: "Come back, until I have had a shot at your *honour.*" (Our countryman, vernacularly, was a superior individual in his countrymen's opinion, by their application to him of the term honour, as "his honour," "your honour!")

And even illness could not suppress his punning propensity, as instanced in his rejoinder to his physician, whilst attending him towards the removing a great cold from inflicting him, said to this facetious lawyer: "Mr. Curran, you seem to cough with difficulty?" when Curran immediately said to him, "That's wonderful, I was *practising* all night."

Swift, our great satirist, deemed it not beneath the dignity of his great talents indulging in punning in Dublin society, as instanced in these two classical puns of his: A lady in his society having thrown down a fiddle by a brush of her mantle against it, he exclaimed to her, "*Mantua,* væ miseræ nimium vicina Cremonæ." And finding in his

society an elderly gentleman having lost his spectacles upon an evening on which it was raining, he facetiously consoled him upon the loss of his glasses by saying to him, that if the rain continued pouring all night he should find them in the morning; and quoting in confirmation of his prophetic intimation the words of the Roman satirist, "Nocte pluit totâ —redeunt *spectacula* mane."

In Trinity College, fellows and students are addicted to the practice of punning; in fact, the pun is relished by all those who come within the walls of our university. A pun's perpetration by a student at an examination in our college would rescue him from previous condemnation of his examiner, and save him from *caution*. A witty fellow of Old Trinity, finding a student at an examination unable to solve a question proposed for his solution by him from Euclid's geometry, advised his having recourse to the plates to assist him in his difficulty, when he sorrowfully proclaimed the impossibility of his doing so by saying, "I am already *disked*." A poor *fellow* of the name of Fortune, whose answering proved at a dread fellowship examination in Trinity College of a most disastrous character in respect to his chances for obtaining the then object of his false ambition, in consequence obtained as a punning appendage to his name the affix of "Mis"—and so was in future termed by collegians *Mis*-fortune.

At an election in our college, whereat our Trinity boys behave with a degree of riotous vivacity scarcely creditable to sober-minded individuals, punning is rife. On one occasion, a distinguished scholar of the house of the name of *O'Hea* was addressing the electors in the great hall of our college, and continuing to do so for a more lengthened period than was pleasing to the mind of a student who was listening to his oration, when he exclaimed, in his hearing, in the words of the poet Virgil—"*O Hæ! jam satis!*"

A rough clownish student, with a brogue on his tongue you could hang your hat upon, translated the words "publicam villam," appearing in a passage of one of the orations of Cicero—*a public house*;—and so to his disaster he unconsciously blundered forth a pun.

A student at a Trinity examination wittily excused his wrong pronunciation of the term nimirum to his examiner, by quoting the line of Horace, commencing "*Ni mirum*," and which proclaims "A. Claudius alone being cognisant of *ni mirum*."

A rustic Latinist, a student of our college, at an examination thus rendered the well-known lines, "Exegi monumentum ære perennius"—"I *eat* a monument *harder* than brass;" when his facetious examiner proclaimed to him—"*You* would just answer for our *Commons*." And on the occasion of the funeral of Doctor Troy, a late Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, in its passing by the front of Trinity College, a student who was looking on at the melancholy spectacle facetiously exclaimed: "Fuit *Ilium*—*Troy* was."

The splendid building the Bank of Ireland, College Green, previous to its being converted into a great money safe, was our Parliament House, which it never will again be, in consequence of our continual *disunion*, in the year 1794 presented a perfect specimen of Ionic architecture; but subsequently the Irish peers, in bad taste, gave orders to the famous Irish

architect Gaudon to erect an entrance to the House of Lords after the Corinthian style of architecture, who performed this allotted task with sulky reluctance, as was well portrayed in his answer to a fop, who was viewing the portico he was erecting as its cover, on inquiring from him what style of architecture might be this portico, when he facetiously, in anger, proclaimed to him, "Why, what order of architecture, *order* of the House of Lords, and be d—d to them."

A poor Irish barrister, whose frequency of court attendance and fewness of briefs to his brother barristers became objects of mirthful consideration, received from them the appellation of Counsellor Necessity, by reason of the legal apothem—"Necessitas nullam legem habet."

A sprightly Irish barrister being engaged, in society, in discussing some disputed topic with a prosy brother of the horsehair, hearing the latter proclaim "that he would put his argument in a nutshell," exclaimed, "Then it must be in a *cocoa-nut shell*."

An Irish barrister, in walking in company with a professional brother, was asked by his companion as to the shape of waistcoat he should recommend his ordering from his tailor, when he immediately recommended his ordering a "*strait*-waistcoat."

A serious-minded Irish barrister, from whose mouth a pun proceeding would be, in the opinion of his friends, almost an impossibility, who now holds with great credit to himself and service to the crown a high colonial position, on a friend to him complaining of the conduct of the late Mr. O'Connell, in respect to not obtaining the return of a rich London merchant as representative for Carlow, to whom he held out most sanguine hopes of his return, deeming his laying out, towards obtaining the honour of sitting in the House of Commons, 2000*l*. as a safe speculation, but keeping the money in his safe would have proved a safer course to him, when he facetiously admitted to him "that he made a *bad return!*"

Even in London our Dublin citizen will not cease practising punning, as instanced in the case of an Irish peer immediately subsequent to the Act of Union, in proceeding along a street in the English metropolis, perceiving a well-known Dublin beggar seeking alms by the side of the flags trodden by him, and asking his reason for leaving Dublin, when he facetiously proclaimed to the Hibernian nobleman—"The Union brought *us* all here."

In our Theatre Royal, frequently puns proceed from the residents of the region of the gods. The poet Moore, being in this theatre, and receiving a cheer of approbation from his admiring countrymen present with him in the theatre, a jolly upper-gallery resident called for a "*little more*." On another occasion, in this theatre, a careless Dublin actor, whilst playing the character of young *Norval* in "Douglas," commenced the well-known Norval speech by conveying in his pronunciation the idea of his name of Norval departing from him when he left the Grampian Hills, a quick-witted jolly upper-gallery boy loudly demanded of him—"What's your *name* in *Thomas-street?*" (His residence was then in Thomas-street—a street of Dublin.)

The poor and abject in our metropolis are, though low their conditions

may be, addicted to the practice of punning. A beggar asking alms from a gentleman in one of the streets of our metropolis, was told by him on doing so to go to the poor-house, exclaimed in irony to his dismal order—"It is a *poor* place!" And a shopman in one of Dublin's shops, finding a man who had been despatched by him for change of a coin return without his having obtained it, in saying to him "he never had change," this poor man proclaimed to him "that he would never find *any change* with him."

Our Dublin citizens, by blundering words or acts, cause puns becoming present to our mind's eye.

A Dublin attorneys' militia corps, in being put through drill in the Dublin Phœnix Park, were ordered to charge by their commandant, when they simultaneously drew from their pockets memorandum-books, and wrote down in them, 6s. 8d.

A wealthy illiterate Dublin citizen, in breakfasting in a suburban locality with a friend, in a parlour from which an occupier of it could command a view of a lawn, upon which cows were grazing, when he, wishing to say something sentimental to his daughters, who were present, exclaimed with a poetic felicity of illustration to them—"How pritty 'tis to see the *kettle* (cattle) *greasing* (grazing) on the lawn." This assertion of his must have thrown a damper upon his chances of gaining the hearts of the young ladies—though it was not one likely to throw *cold water* upon their affections; still he had something more substantial than poetic sentimentality to plead in behalf of his obtainment of the female heart, in his possession of a good bank-book. And England's great satiric poet says:

> Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare,
> And mammon wins the way where seraphs might despair.

The pun in action would be perpetrated in the days of sedan chairs in our city, by our metropolitan wags, in hurrying by old ladies walking in our streets, loudly saying, "By—your—leave; by—your—leave;" the phrase used by our late sedan chair-men, in begging passengers getting out of the way, so that their sedans might proceed along the pathway.

Jackey Barrett, an eccentric fellow of Trinity College, who spent most of his time inside the college boundaries, the most *ignorantly* learned man of his age, blundered out a pun thus—in charging a student of our college calling out "sweep," being in disparagement of himself, and this person denying that he so styled the *dirty* fellow, he exclaimed triumphantly—"That there was no other *sweep* in the place at the time but *himself*."

A blundering gentleman, a citizen of Dublin, unconsciously punned, in proclaiming to his friends as to the destruction of a pair of his boots, in these words: "His boots were destroyed by *keeping them* so long *on his hands*." On another occasion this simple-minded individual unconsciously punned; being requested by friends he met in a Dublin tavern, on his leaving them, to announce to them on reaching where the clock was in the hall the hour, he thus complied with their request on his reaching seeing the clock, in saying—"*The clock has struck three gentlemen in the hall.*" And he further punned in relating to his friends

a serious accident which happened to him by a flag falling upon his leg in a street in our city, in consequence of which he was obliged to keep in-doors for two weeks, saying—"That a flag fell on his leg in Fowues-street, and *he lay under it for a fortnight.*"

The Dublin people thus acted a pun on the occurrence of the funeral of Lord Clare, already alluded to, in their throwing dead *cats* upon his coffin, in consequence of his having said, in regard to Irish malcontents, that he would make them tame as *cats;* an occurrence thus properly alluded to in these verses:

Cold is the heart, and still this voice,
Whilst round thy sacred urn
Rapine, and fraud, and guilt rejoice,
But truth and virtue mourn.

Dublin possessed in the gifted preacher Keogh as witty a clergyman as did London in her famous witty dean, Sydney Smith. A friend of his meeting him in a street of our metropolis, inquired of him in respect to the health of his father, whose calling was the humble one of a coffin-maker, and he immediately, with seeming solemnity, proclaimed to his grief—"That he is *fast working for death;*" and in consequence of his so saying, his friend hurried to his father's residence, and on his reaching it, he, to his joy, saw his father busy making coffins, and perceived the witticism of his gifted son in his previous seemingly melancholy intimation.

At the convivial board in Dublin a punner has a greater opportunity and materials for punning than in any other locality would be vouchsafed to him. The punning Dublin diner-out is resolute in the perpetration of the pun at the convivial board—he will mention to a companion of the festive table taking wine with a pretty girl, who has been helped to port wine, "That Miss —— *supports* him;" should he take notice of a convivial brother seeking carrots from a helper of them, immediately the latter's attention is drawn by him to the vegetable-seeker in his proclaiming—"That Mr. —— is vocative *caret* (*carrot*);" and should he perceive the fish plaice at the dinner-board, immediately he asks for some of this fish, and in doing so proclaims to his host, "That he is glad to find at length a good plaice (*place*) for his acceptance." He will congratulate a juvenile companion of the dinner-table on the beer not being a little *tart*, notwithstanding his relish for tarts; to another juvenile companion of festive scene, on perceiving a servant-man removing a cover from a dish, he will propose the conundrum of "Why is the servant-man removing the dish-cover like a fox-hunter?" and finding him unable to solve the difficulty of answering the question, proclaims its solution to him with solemnity—"Because he is *drawing* the cover." To a neighbouring companion of the prandial scene he will express his relish for Guinness's porter, proclaiming at the same time to him his reason for his taste in this respect—"as he avoids a watery bier (*beer*)." He will triumph over a pompous companion of the convivial board whose progenitor was in the grocery line, on his haughty enunciation of his opinion on some question of the day, by proclaiming to him, "That he would not give a *fig* for his *raisins* (*reasons*) upon it." Should his host's house

possess two knockers to its door, he will proclaim to him amidst his convivial command—"That he keeps his door by *double entry*;" should he at the festive board perceive a brother guest being helped to cockle-sauce, he will immediately intimate to him his hope of its raising in consumption by him the *cockles* of his heart;" if some matter-of-fact gentleman at the festive board with him should express his disapprobation of his constant practice of punning, he will immediately proclaim to him that he would have given in society no *quarter* to Lamb (C. Lamb was a constant practiser of punning), and in order to *pun*ish his anti-witty friend for his temerity in condemning his punning, relates of Leigh Hunt telling of Lamb, on a certain occasion in playing whist perceiving his partner with very soiled hands, exclaiming to him—"If dirt were trumps, what hands you would hold!" And being called to by Coleridge as to his ever having heard him *preach* facetiously, proclaiming, "I never heard you do *anything* else;" if he may perceive a barrister, a companion with him of the convivial board, being helped to a portion of a saddle of mutton, then his neighbouring guest with him of the convivial scene will be addressed by the punster in proclaiming to this individual "that the mutton-eating gentleman of the horse-hair, in consuming mutton, is doing so for the purpose of reaching the *wool-sack*, but that in his opinion it would be better for his *bridling* than *saddling* his tongue;" and if he may perceive a pretty girl of the convivial board being helped to duck, he proclaims his surprise to his lively female sister-guest of the festive scene at her cannibal propensity, exhibited in her eating a *quaker;* and if he perceives a Mr. Brown partaking of strong porter, he proclaims to his convivial friends around him, that "Mr. Brown drinks *brown stout* to make *Brown stout.*"

In Dublin society at present punning is practised, but other species of wit are not so apparent in it as were in more noisy merry days of Dublin. The sorrows of our people, and the madness of their politicians, have cast over the minds of our citizens a melancholy, which has sobered them down into a state of subdued merriment. With deep drinking in Dublin society has departed that species of boisterous mirth, which is ever distasteful to the man of refined mind and genuine wit. Dublin society being composed to a large extent of professional men, presents a description of a superior kind, in which wit, genius, learning, experience, and kindness, combine to give charms of no ordinary degree to those fortunate to mix in its circle.

EXPIATION: A TALE OF THE REIGN OF TERROR.

FROM THE FRENCH.

By Henry Cooke.

IX.

THE VICTIM.

With this despairing cry of love—with these parting words—*We ne'er shall meet again!*—still ringing in his ears, and which seemed to sink like a death-knell on his heart, the chevalier left the house in a state of mind which no words can describe. He had not proceeded far when he encountered Philippe returning from the Conciergerie, where he had been sent with a letter from the countess to her son.

"Chevalier," said the old man, in a voice broken by emotion, "I have just seen the count. He is to be tried at ten this morning: he will be executed at five this afternoon!"

"Not if the sum demanded for his ransom is paid!" replied Robert, with a shudder.

"I fear that it is no longer time! The count has not again seen that miscreant Rousteau!"

"Rousteau!" repeated the chevalier, on whose mind a sudden light seemed to break—"is it Rousteau who is to save him, and to whom the hundred thousand francs in gold is to be paid? Oh! why, why didst thou not tell me this? My brother would have been saved by this time."

"I thought that your brother had told you all. Besides, knowing that you were with Rousteau at the Luxembourg yesterday, I naturally concluded that you were concerting measures with him for the count's safety."

"The trial is at ten: I have still two hours before me!" said Robert, speaking to himself.

"I sought Rousteau in all directions," resumed the old man, bitterly, "but could gain no tidings of him from any one. My poor master, who would listen to nothing, and preferred to die rather than owe his life to this miscreant, consents now to all that can be done to save him."

"If my brother's safety depends upon Rousteau," replied the chevalier, "he is saved!"

"To whom are you taking this gold?" demanded Philippe, gravely. "Have you there the remainder of the treasure?"

"Listen, Philippe," replied the chevalier, blushing before this old servant—"I will save my brother or perish with him. Return to my mother, and do not leave her for an instant; tell her that she may depend upon me, and that I will restore to her her son! Tell her all that will be necessary to prevent her from leaving the hotel until I return to it with my brother."

Thus saying, he wrung the old man's hand in silence, and jumping into a cab, drove towards the Barrière des Bons-Hommes, by the Champs

Elysées. The civic guard, who were on duty at this post, opened the gate, and demanded to see his *carte de civisme*. He produced one which Rousteau had given him, and was allowed to pass. The vehicle stopped before a house apparently uninhabited, all the windows facing the street being closed. Rousteau received the chevalier at the door, and they entered the house together.

"We began to think you were not coming again," he said. "Have you brought more money? We are ready to give you your revenge!"

"Rousteau," replied the chevalier, sternly, "I do not return to play: I return to call upon you to perform your promise, and save my brother. Here is the gold!"

"How much have you?" demanded Rousteau, eagerly.

"About eighty thousand francs, which I will give you the instant my brother is free."

"It comes rather late," muttered Rousteau, who was thinking how he could get possession of the money without earning it.

"Why did you not tell me yesterday," resumed the chevalier, "that it was from you I was to purchase my brother's life and liberty?"

"It escaped my memory, I suppose," replied Rousteau, evasively. "You have there, you say, eighty thousand francs? The sum agreed upon was a hundred thousand!"

"A hundred thousand!" repeated the chevalier, who thought that this difference could not occasion any serious difficulty. "I give what I have."

"That won't do," replied the inspector of prisons, delighted to have a pretext for departing from his word; "a hundred thousand francs was the sum stipulated for."

"Is it you, Rousteau, who thus bargain with me for my poor brother's life?" cried Robert, indignantly.

"No, I am merely the agent."

"Take what I have, and my note of hand for the remainder!"

"Bah! my poor chevalier; notes of hand don't pass muster in these days."

"Then lend me twenty thousand francs to complete the sum. You have won them, and more, from me to-night."

"Ah! but I unfortunately lost them again during your absence!"

"Then take me to this wolf who taxes my poor brother's head at a hundred thousand francs," said Robert, with suppressed anger.

"Impossible! chevalier—impossible! He is a member of the revolutionary tribunal, and it would be as much as my head is worth to divulge his secrets."

"You will not, then, give me the least assistance in the painful position in which I find myself? You wish for my brother's death," replied the chevalier, with flashing eyes.

"I confess that grief at his loss would not kill me," replied Rousteau, drily.

"Rousteau, you are a cold-blooded villain: I ought to have perceived it long ago."

"Go and tell the ex-count that I am guillotined, and see how he will bewail my loss! *Ma foi!* I am inclined to think that there is not much love lost between us."

"I am aware that my brother and you have never liked each other. Yet, Rousteau, I rely upon you to aid me in saving him."

"*Parbleu!* what can I do?" replied Rousteau, coughing violently. "Deuce take this cough! Hast thou a hundred thousand francs? Curse this cough! *Mort de diable!* I really think that some of these days I shall cough my lungs up!"

"I told you, and I tell you again, that I had but three or four thousand louis-d'ors in all: I have lost two thousand of them at this infernal hell!"

"If you lost two thousand you can as easily regain them: the luck was against you, it is true, but luck changes like everything else. *Sacre ciel!* if luck had stuck to me as closely as this detestable cough, I should at this moment be one of the richest men in Christendom."

"Rousteau, I implore you—I entreat you to save my brother."

"Without the hundred thousand francs I can do nothing."

"How am I to get them?" cried Robert, in despair. "Oh! play, execrable play! thou hast made me the assassin of my brother!"

"Come, come, chevalier, don't be childish," replied Rousteau, in a wheedling tone, as he drew him towards the stairs. "We owe thee a revenge!"

"A revenge?" cried Robert, once more possessed with the love for play. "Fate has been very cruel to me."

"Yes, but fortune changes, and if you had been possessed of the money to continue the game, I am convinced that you would have retrieved all your losses."

"I think so too. But no, I will not play so long as I have fears for my brother's life."

"One stroke of luck," said the tempter—"one stroke of luck will enable you to complete the hundred thousand francs!"

"But suppose I was to lose! The thought is madness!"

"Try, then, some other expedient for raising the money. You are short of twenty thousand francs."

"Twenty thousand francs!" repeated the chevalier, with anguish, as he heard the gold ringing on the tables up-stairs—"twenty thousand francs!"

"A quarter of an hour's luck, and you have them," replied Rousteau, still urging him towards the stairs. "Curse this cough! it shakes me all to pieces. You only want one card. I will gladly go halves in your play, for upon my life I believe we shall break the bank. Twenty thousand francs is a bagatelle. I promise thee treble the amount."

"It is impossible that fortune can any longer be unfavourable to me," said Robert, wavering more and more. "Heaven will protect a brother who wishes to save a brother. Twenty thousand francs! I only want twenty thousand francs, and the count will be free! Twenty thousand francs! and my poor mother will not weep her eldest son!—Come, Rousteau, come!"

X.

EXPIATION, AND CONCLUSION.

To be or not to be, that is the question.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE chevalier played for hours without intermission, and with always the same ill-luck. He was in the midst of sharpers, who had arranged beforehand to victimise him. They proceeded adroitly in the execution of their abominable plan, inspired and directed by the miscreant Rousteau, who was the first to disappear when he saw that the chevalier's funds were nearly exhausted; but the latter was not for a time aware of his absence, and continued to play without a moment's respite. He was a prey to a kind of frenzy, which at intervals almost deprived him of the faculty of seeing and hearing. He uttered not a word—he raised not his eyes above the green cloth on which he saw his last hopes disappear. He sighed deeply. He shed tears of agony, which ran upon the cards—he tore his breast with his nails in affecting to remain calm—he plucked his hair in feigning to rest himself with his head in his hands. His reason seemed to totter.

The clock struck two. The chevalier started, and seemed to awake from a long and heavy sleep. He thrust his hand into his pocket and found there fifty louis: it was all which remained of the treasure destined to pay the ransom of his brother! He thought he was in a dream: he felt chilled with horror and affright, like one who awakes from a fearful nightmare. When at last he began to collect his ideas, he found that he was alone. He uttered a cry of despair: he cast his eye upon the dial to assure himself that it was two o'clock which had just struck. He threw himself into a chair and hid his face in his hands. Two o'clock! and his brother had been tried at ten! Two o'clock! and the sentence would be executed at five! He saw, too late, that he had been victimised by Rousteau. He shouted that miscreant's name, but no voice responded to his call: the house was deserted—all was silent as death itself—no eye, save one, witnessed the anguish that poor man endured. He gnashed his teeth with rage. His hair dishevelled, his eyes flashing fire, his hands clenched, he paced up and down the room in an agony of shame, remorse, and despair. For a moment he contemplated suicide, and took a small phial of opium from his pocket, but almost as instantly replaced it. He was not yet a fratricide; he had still two hours before him to consider how he could save his brother. A sublime idea passed like lightning through his brain. He had an atonement to make: he would die on the scaffold in his brother's place! He resolved to devote all his energy to accomplish this. It would be a noble expiation of his crime.

He returned to Paris on foot, exhibited the *carte de civisme* which Rousteau had given him, and passed the barrier. Once in Paris he felt more composed. He had only one idea—the safety of his brother. He forgot aught else—he forgot himself, he forgot Louise. He ran at the top of his speed down the Champs Elysées. It struck three o'clock as breathless and in a profuse perspiration, he reached the wicket of th Conciergerie.

"Oh! thank Heaven you have arrived at last!" said Canut, who stoo

near the door. "The countess sent me to seek you. I have been four hours awaiting you here. Well, what have you done?" he added in a severe tone, noticing the chevalier's disordered appearance. "Shall you save the Count de Chaville?"

"My mother sent thee to seek me?" replied the chevalier, gasping for breath. "And my—my brother?"

"Your brother," said Canut, regarding him fixedly—"your brother is to be guillotined at five o'clock!"

"Almighty God!" murmured the chevalier, striking his forehead.

"Your mother is almost distracted at not having seen you. Hasten to comfort her, or she will rejoin you here."

"Prevent her, my dear Canut—prevent her from thus rushing to certain death. Retain her, thee and Philippe; guard her, watch over her."

"But what am I to say of her eldest son? Are you not coming yourself to comfort her?"

"No; I must remain here," replied the chevalier, in a solemn tone. "Return alone, and say from me to this poor mother, that this evening she shall know what I have done to save my brother."

"Have you any other order to give me?" demanded Canut, moved at the increasing emotion of the chevalier.

"Canut," he said, in a voice little above a whisper—"Canut, I commend to thy care my mother and Louise—all that I love, all that I leave."

"Courage, chevalier; I will remain with them until you return, and this night—this night, under God's blessing, we will leave all together."

"All together!" repeated poor Robert, with intense anguish. "Adieu, my brave Canut," he added, pressing his hand, "adieu!"

"Ah! in what a tone you say adieu!" replied Canut, struck with the sad and profound accent in which this adieu was uttered.

"In these fearful times, Canut, we can never say on parting that we shall meet again!"

"We shall meet again, certainly, and with the count soon be far away from this city of horrors. I only regret that the hundred thousand francs which you have paid for your brother's safety has gone to enrich a rogue like Rousteau!"

The chevalier again pressed his hand, and knocked loudly at the wicket of the Conciergerie. The porter who answered the summons rudely demanded what he wanted. The chevalier glided two louis-d'ors into the fellow's hand, and at the same time produced the *carte de civisme* which Rousteau had given him.

"I wish to speak to the ex-Count de Chaville, who was condemned this morning, and will be executed this evening," said Robert.

The Cerberus, softened by the gold, inclined his head in token of submission, and went to inform one of the turnkeys, in whose ear he whispered something which had a marvellous effect; the man, brutal and insolent as he was, became in a moment polite and obliging. Robert, on reaching the door of his brother's cell, demanded wine, and placed two louis in his conductor's hand. The latter introduced him into the cell without speaking, and locked the door upon the two brothers.

The count, who was writing, did not turn his head to see who thus entered his prison.

"It is me, my brother," whispered Robert, advancing on tiptoe. "They will be here again directly; do not name me."

"Ah! is it you, chevalier?" said the count, colouring violently, and endeavouring to hide under a calm exterior the profound emotion which his brother's arrival caused him—"I did not expect to see you again!"

"Did I not promise to save you? Hist!—I hear footsteps: they come. Turn aside so that they cannot see you."

"To save me!" murmured Ernest, who had prepared himself to die.

"Not a word!" said Robert, throwing his arms around his brother, and forcing him, in spite of himself, into the most obscure angle of the cell. "Remain thus; do not show yourself; don't let them remark your features or the sound of your voice."

"Robert, I had already pardoned you," said the count, touched with his brother's devotion. "Embrace me."

"And I, Ernest, I came to demand your pardon," replied the chevalier, pressing him convulsively in his arms.

"Citizen, do you want anything else?" grumbled the turnkey, placing wine and glasses upon the table.

"Courage, citizen!" said the chevalier, disguising his voice, and hiding his face close to the count's—"I will teach thee how to die!"

"You are aware, citizens, that the cart will be here at four?" replied the gaoler, not wishing to disturb these last adieus.

"My brother," said Robert, when this sinister person had withdrawn, "I deeply regret my insulting behaviour to you the other day."

"We were both in the wrong, Robert. I have, however, more to reproach myself with than you. I have been severe and harsh——"

"But you have given me excellent advice, which it would have been well for me had I followed. Alas! this deplorable passion for play——"

"Speak no more of it, my dear Robert, since you have conquered it. Gaming is a fault which often leads to crime."

"To crime!" repeated the chevalier, overwhelmed with remorse and shame.

"It is not your love for play that I have so much deplored, as your *penchant* for philosophical ideas. With you, the revolution was a charming theory. You thought it would prove a panacea for human woes. You believed that sin, and avarice, and selfishness were about to be banished from the world by the lights of philosophy. See how you have been deceived! Look at the wretches around us, who, with liberty, equality, and fraternity on their lips, are running about the country with fire and sword, destroying its noblest monuments, defacing God's image wherever they find it, and even desecrating the temples of the dead! And yet these wretches, with their reeking knives at our throats, call upon us to fraternise with them. Believe me, my poor Robert, that this vaunted liberty, equality, and fraternity is a bugbear of the imagination, which can never exist in reality upon earth, so long as human nature remains what it is. What we require in this country is a strong monarchical form of government. People must be kept in their proper places, the rabble held in subjection, the king resume his rights, before we can hope for a better state of things."

"My brother," said Robert, in an imploring tone, "we will resume

this discussion at another time and place; the moments now are precious."

"What I blame—what I shall always blame, chevalier, is the coldness you evince for the royalists."

"My brother, my dear brother," replied Robert, in a tone of agonised entreaty—"at this moment—at this supreme moment, I implore you to think only of the subject which brings me to you. We have but an hour before us. Now listen! They will come presently to seek those condemned to die. Your name is upon the list, but you will not appear when your name is called; the turnkey will not even open your prison."

"But to-morrow—but the days following?"

"Everything is provided for," continued the chevalier, who felt his resolution totter at the thought of the sacrifice he meditated. "This evening, after the hour of execution, the turnkey will desire you to leave, and you will do so instantly, without uttering a word, or replying to the questions he may put to you."

"And you, Robert, shall you not accompany me, or are you obliged to precede me?"

"In a few moments we shall be separated," said Robert, with anguish, as he fortified himself in his resolution.

"Separated!" repeated the count; "I would rather we appeared before our mother together."

"Observe with scrupulous care my directions, my dear brother, for life depends upon your so doing. Now quick!—dress yourself in my clothes, and I will put on yours."

"What! you wish me to put on the republican costume, which it grieves me so to see you wear?"

"Once in the street, I will return you your dress; but this disguise is indispensable, since you must pass for me."

"And you, Robert, you will pass then for me?" replied the count, while a doubt crossed his mind.

"Do not think of me, brother," said Robert, hastily taking off his clothes, "they will not retain me at the Conciergerie. Ernest, I implore you, in the name of our mother, to dress yourself quickly, in order that we may both be ready."

Whilst the count reluctantly put on the republican costume, the chevalier filled two tumblers with wine, and added several drops of opium to the one which he intended for his brother.

"We are approaching the decisive moment, brother," he said. "This wine will give us strength and hope."

"Let us drink to the triumph of the good cause," said the count, emptying his glass and filling another.

"Remember, Ernest, the instructions you are to follow to leave this place," replied Robert, watching with intense anxiety the effects of the opium. "I have left some gold in the waistcoat pocket, in case you should find it requisite to fee the gaoler."

"I will do my best, and leave the rest to Providence," replied Ernest, whose eyes glistened under the effects of the narcotic. "But you do not accept my toast?"

"The turnkey will awake you and desire you to retire; you will leave

the prison without uttering a word, and avoid observation as much as possible."

"Must I repeat my toast, Robert?" said the count, drowsily. "Drink with me to the good cause!"

"To the good cause!" repeated Robert, shuddering, as he heard the fatal cart enter the court. "My—my brother, do you hear?"

"Robert, embrace me," replied the count. "You are now a royalist: we are now friends and brothers."

"Heavens! he will not sleep," thought the chevalier, who saw his brother's eyes alternately open and shut.

"We will fight in La Vendée for God and the king!" muttered Ernest. "Vive le Roi! Down with the republic!"

"Hush!" said the chevalier, placing one hand over his brother's mouth, and extending the other with terror towards the door. "Hush! They come."

"Embrace me again, dear Robert," replied the count, fast sinking into a state of stupor. "It is a complete reconciliation between us."

"Ernest, I commend to you Louise," said the chevalier, hanging over him; "protect her, love her in remembrance of me. And my—my mother, my good mother! You will make her forgive me in favour of this bloody expiation? Tell her how I saved your life, and at what price!—Oh! my brother, adieu!—adieu! I leave you to the care of Providence, and in the hope that one head will suffice at the guillotine!"

The Count de Chaville had fallen asleep, with his head upon the table.

Robert fell upon his knees.

They were calling over the names of the twenty-five victims who were to die that day.

He started on hearing that of Ernest Chaville: it fell like a sentence of death upon his heart. He shook in every limb. The sacrifice he was about to accomplish appeared to him in frightful colours, and the image of Louise rose before him to forbid him to pass farther. He sprang, nevertheless, towards the door as it opened.

"Ernest Chaville is wanted," said the gaoler, taking off his bonnet in honour of the two louis-d'ors which he had received for a bottle of wine. "Prisoner," he added, as Robert advanced and indicated by a mute gesture the sleeping count, "thy friend did not come here to sleep, I suppose?"

"No," said Robert, placing all the gold he had in the turnkey's hand; "but he has drank more than usual to day, to console himself for my loss. Do not awake him, citizen; he is a warm and devoted friend of mine, republican though he be!"

"I cannot let him remain longer than seven," replied the turnkey, delighted with the large sum he had received for so slight a service.

"Be it so. At that hour thou wilt awake him carefully and conduct him thyself outside the prison, for I doubt if he will have slept off the fumes of the wine sufficiently to walk without assistance."

The turnkey promised that he would attend to these instructions.

When Robert was crossing the great court on his way to the fatal cart, he saw amongst the crowd Canut, who uttered an exclamation of astonishment and grief. The chevalier imposed silence upon him by placing his finger on his lips. He then waved him a solemn and noble

adieu. The faithful fellow burst into tears, and seizing the chevalier's hand, fervently kissed it. The gendarmes roughly repulsed him.

"To my mother!" cried the chevalier, placing his hand upon his heart—"to my brother!—to Louise!"

The cart, filled with victims, drove off amidst the yells of a hideous populace.

On his way to the place of execution Robert remained motionless, with his face hidden in his hands. When the cart halted at the foot of the scaffold his ear was startled by a peculiar cough close to him, which recalled to his recollection the terrible scenes of the preceding night.

"Robert!" cried the criminal, with amazement.

"Rousteau!" replied the chevalier, turning round with disgust. "Wretch!"

"It is thy gold which has brought me to this!" said Rousteau, who was the first made to dismount. "I robbed thee, and was robbed and sold in my turn. Here I am!" he added, coughing violently. "Ah! there is something up there to cure my cough. And thee, chevalier, what dost thou here? thou hast neither been tried nor condemned? Hast thou taken thy brother's place?"

"Thou shalt know it in hell!" interrupted Robert, placing his hand over the miscreant's mouth, and forcing him before him up the steps of the scaffold. "Citizen," he said to the executioner, "this villain wishes to harangue the people against the republic; silence him as quickly as possible."

The executioner replied by a grim smile.

"He deceives you! he deceives you!" cried Rousteau, as the latter seized and roughly strapped him to the upright plank; "this man is not the ex-Count de Chaville, the royalist, he is his——"

The plank sunk, the knife descended, the head fell.

The body was unstrapped and thrown down a hole on the side of the scaffold. The knife slowly ascended; the blood-stained plank was once more raised in an upright position. . . . . "Now, my lad!" said the executioner, placing his hand gently upon Robert's shoulder. . . . . .

The Countess de Chaville, the Marquis d'Auton, and Louise, were assembled awaiting the return of Canut and Philippe, whom they had sent four hours previously to the Conciergerie to ascertain the fate of the Count de Chaville. It struck eight o'clock: the countess uttered a groan; the marquis made a gesture of despair; Louise burst into tears. At that moment, Canut and Philippe arrived, sustaining and almost carrying the Count de Chaville, who seemed scarcely conscious of passing events.

"Robert!" gasped Mademoiselle d'Auton, who comprehended all—"he is dead!"

"Guillotined!" murmured Canut.

LANSDOWNIANÆ.

BY JOHN STEBBING.

A BUNDLE of letters and papers of the early part of the seventeenth century, chiefly relating to the private affairs of Sir Michael and Lady Hicks, both very good persons in their way, and treated with great respect by all their friends and relatives; one cause of which may be found, perhaps, from these two first letters, one from Lord Pembroke to the husband, desiring that he would not call in his money until six months longer, and promising to be punctual with the interest; and the other from Lord Montgomery to the lady, in which he says: "Doe not presse the lawe against any of the sureties, for that is a business in which I was never soe dishonoured." We are not quite sure that the fate of the poor noblemen entirely depended upon the forbearance of the baronet and his lady, for we have a little suspicion that some of the money came out of the city, the next letter being from Alderman Lowe's wife to her sister, Lady Hicks, in which she says: "My husband will be at London one Munday next." We do not see, Lady Hicks, how you can give his lordship any longer time for the payment of that money, when your daughter Helena writes to you so touching a letter of her husband's troubles; she does not ask for anything, but she says that her husband must accept the 1600*l.* offered for his estate; and she concludes: "Good mother, I reseved a Bibell from you, for which I give you many thankes. Your godson is very well; he littel thinkes of his father's troubles, for he is very mery."

In this next paper, Mr. George Goodwin, a boarding-school master at Moreton, writes to Lady Hicks of the return of her son to school, July 28, 1613, as a schoolmaster might write on the same subject to-day; but Mr. Francis Nethersole, the Cambridge tutor of an elder son, writes to decline with hearty thanks an invitation to her house, desiring to be excused this summer, which he had long since destined to study. He then says of his pupil: "He grows a man every day, and ere another year goe about, will, I feare, loake to leave this place altogether, as other gentlemen use to do, before which time I would gladly make him fit to go on in his study without help, as I hope I shall. In the mean time, you have not been in any way forgetful of me, but are so much before hand with your thankfulness, that, for no other reason, I protest, I did set down nothing last quarter for tuition, hoping you would not have observed it."

The neat handwriting of this single page which follows, discloses another letter full of troubles from Helena Delahoy to her mother: "Good mother, I received your letter, and touching my father-in-law, there is littel good to be donne with him; he has but the name of a father and not the care of a father." Then further on she says, that many of their acquaintances would have her husband sell his estate, but "his frinds that loves him persade him to the conterry; but some think it tis long of me that he will not sell it, that I draw him from it, becase I whold have it to my jointure." A small note which succeeds this letter concludes with "Pasienes is the gretest contentment I have." From this long epistle next in order we learn that Lady Hicks has another married daughter, Mrs. Parvis, who has children, "little Tim and less Will."

The perusal of a volume like that before us is something like a rambling tour for one thing, and that is, the constant reappearance of old acquaintances whom we had entirely parted with, as we thought, and almost forgotten. Here is our friend George Goodwin, the schoolmaster, again, evidently all the better for his summer vacation. He has been acquiring a little stock of self-importance as well as health in his holiday rambles, and he takes care to let us know that his good friend Sir John Poyntz sending for him had been the cause of his absence when his pupil returned to school. The next is a painful communication from John Delahoy to her ladyship his mother-in-law. Speaking of his father, he says: "I can doe no good with him, he is so drawn by my brother, that wee dyd fall out about y^t^ verye muche; seeinge I cannot prevayle by fayre means, but hee will be drawn by him that ever wrought his discredit, I muste take that course which I am unwillinge to do." He encloses a copy of a letter to be re-written and sent to his father by Lady Hicks, from which it appears that there was some promise made by the old gentleman at the time of the marriage with respect to a settlement, which still remained unfulfilled. But a few casual words carry our thoughts away from family feuds and money matters; only separated by a comma from the paragraph we have last quoted, comes, "the plague is in manye parts hereaboute, and in moste of the chief townes."

A pleasant note from Mr. George Goodwin, whom we are rapidly beginning to appreciate very highly: "Good madam, your sonne, my pupill, I praise God, dothe very well. Lately he receyved ye apparell sent, and intendeth by his letters to signifie his dutifull thankfullness to your ladyship, though as yet his letters be not fully finished. We are bold at this present (with our bounden remembrance) to present your ladyship with a small testimonie of our myndfull affection towards your ladyship. From my pond in my garden I have sent three suche small carpes as it yieldeth: whereunto my wyfe hath added a very yonge sucking-pigge, and suche a little cheesse as her small dayrie affordeth."

Her ladyship was a great patroness of education, and seems to have relieved her husband of any trouble on that head, for all the tutors write to her instead of to Sir Michael. Here is one from Monsieur P. Erondelle respecting the instruction in French of her daughters still residing with her; and another from Mr. Francis Nethersole respecting the return of her son to Cambridge, and directed "To ye Right Worshipfull my very singular good lady, ye Lady Elizabeth Hickes, at her house in Austin Fryers."

Here is a little scandal for the tea-table, if only tea had been in use then, which it was not; Mr. Alderman Lowe writes to his sister-in-law about the marriage of a certain acquaintance of theirs in the Fleet.

Mr. George Goodwin, the schoolmaster, whose reputation with us had been raised above par by the carp and the sucking-pig and the little cheese, such as his wife's dairy afforded, now loses much of our respect by reason that he tutors his pupil to send this formal, prigmatical letter to her ladyship his mother; it is on ruled lines, and in a handwriting which would be considered excellent at the present day: "Most lovinge mother, I have alwaies found your loving and mindfull kindnes toward me. Wherefore I knowe it to be my dutie to wright very often unto you, because I consider that nothinge can fall out more acceptable unto you

than to heare of me, and of my good proceedings in learninge. Therefore I will alwaies have a readie mind unto my studies, that I maie requite (though it be the lest part) of your benefites. So remembringe my most humble dutie unto you, and intreating you to send me a jerkin, I take my leave and committ you to God. Your most obedient sonne, Michael Hickes." Very well composed, Mr. Goodwin, but we should have thanked you a great deal more if you had let the boy write his letter alone, for in that case we should have heard, maybe, something of the condition of schoolboy poaching in fish-ponds in that same year 1613; not to mention a little likeness of your own nose and chin in one corner. And after all, her ladyship seems to have estimated the effusion at its real value, for she has endorsed it, " Michel sends for a jerkin."

These foreign letters are from Venice, from Mr. Henry Parvis, her ladyship's son-in-law, and from Mr. Francis Lowe, her nephew. The former gentleman appears to have travelled a good deal, and to have been a person of some consequence, for in an earlier manuscript we find Sir Thomas Glover, ambassador at Constantinople, engaged in a desperate quarrel with him whilst staying in that city; and from the letter of the latter, who appears to have been young and travelled under Mr. Parvis's protection, it seems that the ambassador at Venice felt it necessary to pay them a good deal of attention.

After struggling through so many letters to Lady Hicks, for the most part wretchedly written, it seems a piece of hard fortune indeed that this note, from her ladyship herself to her husband, most exquisitely written, should be but a fragment; but, fragment as it is, we cannot forbear copying it: " It was very good and it was well eaton; we dranke to you and wisht you here to eate of it, but I cannot have it with wishing. If I could you should not be from hence so much as you ar, but if I had all that I wolde I think I should be unwilling to leave the worlde, therefore I thinke it tis well as it tis. I pray God bles you and give you helth, for I protest to you it tis the chefest thing I desier in this world. I had sent your men for you though you had not sente for them. I was at my brother Colstone's, and came home a porpose to write to you; he toulde me that he wolde goe to London in the morning and come home afote with you at night, for this whether it tis better to goe then to ride or to come in your coche; it freses soe hard that my encke will cease fale out of my pene nor my fingers houlde my pen; but that I write to you I shoulde cease write in your counting-house without a fier, but I will nowe bed you godnight and sende you good reste and bles us with his grase—your boy and girl is well I thanke God. Your ever loving wife, Elizabeth Hickes."

Such is a brief notice of a part of the correspondence of an English lady in the time when James the First was king and Lord Rochester was favourite; when the books of Vorstius, the divinity professor at Steinfort, were being publicly burned at London, Cambridge, and Oxford; when a profound tranquillity prevailed throughout the country, but when that flaming star was now about to appear which was too truly considered a presage of coming ill. Sir Michael was intimate with Sir John Denham, the father of the poet, and Lady Hicks wore a pair of carnation stockings presented to her as a new year's gift by Lord Chancellor Bacon.

THE COMING MAN—GEORGE OWEN.

BY AN OLD PLAY-GOER.

THE old York circuit, perhaps nearly as much as any circuit in England, has been rich in good actors in its time. To it many a London celebrity has owed his or her thanks for a good training—to it we owe some thanks for the talent it has from time to time sent up to delight us smoke-dried Cockneys. It is not in our power, nor perhaps our inclination, to name all those children of histrionic talent to whom the old York circuit has been a nursery; but as we intend to write a brief theatrical article, we will name a few of them before we come to the object proper of our sketch—name them promiscuously, as they occur to us.

Mrs. Inchbald. And here we must qualify, for Mrs. Inchbald was not a great actress, but a little and a poor one, but a fine natural authoress, as everybody knows who has read her "Simple Story" and "Nature and Art." Well, she made little out as an actress, but forced her gentle way by her beautiful writing, and her beautiful person and amiable manners. *Apropos* of the last but one, she loved it so much that in her sixty-eighth year she died at Kensington, and—hear it ye gods of yore and ye angels of modern days—of tight lacing! And although her dramatic pieces were partially, and many of them more than partially, successful, and though some of them continue to be represented to this day, her future fame will rest upon her stories. So although she was on the circuit she could not make an actress—yet who shall say that that was the circuit's fault?

John Philip Kemble—how gloriously that name rings in an old playgoer's ear!—no need to write half a dozen lines here of him. He was long upon the old York circuit.

And so was Cummins. You never heard of Cummins, young reader, you say. That is likely enough. But he was a fine old provincial tragedian, one of the olden time. The provinces belonged to him, and he to the provinces. He was of the provinces provincial. Country playgoers thought Cummins unapproachable, so that once when the great Kemble, then in power, was about to play a starring engagement—we think at Chester—the management thought proper to announce him on the bills as "Mr. Kemble, the great tragedian, after the manner of Mr. Cummins." The latter never got up to town, but there is no doubt he was a very good actor in his way. Long upon the circuit, too, were Fawcett, Mrs. Jordan, Little Knight, and Henry Compton—not to forget the little great one who has lately shown his comic phiz at the Olympic —F. Robson.

At the head of the Yorkshire company now—worthy to be at the head of any company—is GEORGE OWEN, decidedly one of the finest and most intellectual actors on the stage. The labour of calling attention to talent like his is a labour of love, and we rejoice in being able to be before the London press generally in acknowledging it. This we can do because we have seen him, and often, whilst others have not. To most of

our country readers the name and ability of Mr. Owen are well known, for there are few country play-goers, or country journals, that have not warmly recognised the latter; but as he is yet a stranger to the London boards, we may be permitted, as not a new contributor to *Ainsworth*, to introduce him to its readers—and this not in a critique which in a London periodical could hardly be made interesting upon an at present provincial actor; but rather in the jubilant of one introducing to his fellows what was supposed not to be—a good actor in the provinces.

George Owen's walk is tragedy, in which—we say it deliberately, after seeing Phelps, Kean, and others—take him altogether, we do not think there is more than one man on the stage at present to excel him. He is young in years but old in study and experience, and his acting is especially characterised by a discriminating vigour that is as rare as any good quality on the stage. He is a classical actor. The scholar and the gentleman is evident through all he does; and nature and his author are his study instead of his audience. Generally, he is very free from exggeration, which, however, he occasionally falls into, when it looks more like a *faux pas* than a premeditated step. Yet he is no mere common-sense actor. A great feature in his acting is certainly steadiness; but in each character we have seen him there has been occasional "flashes of originality," we may call them, to startle and thrill the audience—he never fails to rivet attention; and with youth, genius, and earnestness on his side, we look upon the day as not far distant when George Owen will stand upon the English stage as *the* actor *par excellence*. He has got every quality that constitutes a great actor already, and with time to mature these qualities, and study to refine them, we know of no one who, in a few years, will be able to dispute the championship of the stage with him.

Macready off the stage, there is no man on it to nearly approach George Owen in the character of *Richelieu:* that character is as much Owen's now as it was Macready's a few years ago. His *King Lear*, too, is a grand conception, and his manner of giving

Blow wind and crack your cheek,

sublime. The same may be said of his *Cardinal Wolsey*, and his rendering of several lines in the third act of "Henry VIII." And his *Hamlet*, *Zanga*, *Huon* in "Love," *Othello*, *Sir Giles Overreach*, *The Stranger*, and *Sir John Falstaff*, all worthy of, and some of them unequalled by, any man on the stage. And so, for the present, we have done. All we wished to say was, that the old York circuit is to give us another actor—that the Coming Man in tragedy is at present in the provinces, under the name of George Owen. When he appears in London we may again take up our pen to attempt to write of his acting discriminately, and *à la critique*.

HUGH O'HEGAN'S HISTORY; OR, UPS AND DOWNS OF IRISH LIFE.

BY J. G. MACWALTER.

PART I.

I.

It was a gloomy evening in the February of 1828 when Brien O'Hegan, one of the most industrious farmers in all Tipperary, found himself again within sight of his humble but not uncomfortable home. He had been absent since Christmas, on an expedition to an inexorable landlord, who resided in state at Dublin, seldom troubling himself about his distant tenants. The farmer was returning, and his sunken eye, unsteady gait, and general appearance, told how the news he brought preyed upon him.

Poor Brien, fearing to trust an appeal to his master's mercy, which would have to pass through an agent's hands, conceived the notion of pleading his own cause in his own proper person, and leaving no chance of escape to him whose pity he meant to assail. Having obtained his good wife's permission and her hearty blessing, united with the more formal but not less earnest benediction of his priest—for Brien was a devout Catholic—he prepared to set out. The preparation for a journey to the Irish metropolis, from so remote a quarter as the county of Tipperary, was in those days a matter of no small moment. Every friend within reach had to be bade adieu—every enemy with whom reconciliation was possible had to be conciliated—every arrangement which the state of his temporal concerns demanded, and every care which his spiritual wants seemed to need, must be well and scrupulously attended to before the traveller dare trust himself upon "a voyage" so tedious, if not perilous, as that to Dublin from Tipperary was then deemed. Less confusion and anxiety are evidenced in this age of expeditious travelling by those who set their traps together for a trip to Australia, than by any one fated to travel a few hundred miles. This is perhaps already well enough known to the reader, so we leave all the rest of that kind which would amplify our contrast to be thought about, premising that that imagination must be supremely dull which fails to comprehend its details—its ups and downs.

Brien O'Hegan, as became a rigid Romanist and a thorough Celt, left nothing undone which custom ever countenanced in the important step of his departure for his landlord's house in Dublin. On the morning of his setting out he heard mass in a narrow nook of his comfortable homestead—he communicated and received on the occasion a special blessing from Father Foley, who accompanied him to the bounds of his own tenement—no further. There he concluded his monitions, which threatened to be as long as the farmer's proposed journey.

"Now, my dear Brien," he whispered, with a solemn calmness, "be discreet, and carefully observe all those things which I have mentioned, and may God the Father and the most holy Virgin guide, guard, speed, and prosper you. Amen."

"Amen!" ejaculated Brien, fervently, and with tears in his eyes;

"without that I could do nothing. It will be a sore day to me, Father Foley, if I don't succeed. Is there law or reason that compels men who are outside Bedlam to be tied in this way to the wills of others? Oh, good God! it fires me to think upon it. Here am I—a man capable of reasoning, and for all that I'm a Catholic, as good a man as ever stood in Hugh Massey's shoes, though he happens to be my landlord; yet I can't christen my child, if God sends me one, by what name I choose, or get it baptised by those who can, in my opinion, rightly baptise, unless I do it by stealth; and for what is this? Why is this? How—how—oh——"

"Cool yourself, Brien—cool yourself," interposed the priest, who, however, read favourably the spirit of his companion. "Lay your case before that heretic tyrant in the coolest manner. Remember my cautions, and let me again remind you of how you are to speak. 'Sir,' say you, 'it is now a year since you permitted me to accept the proffered hand of Julia Massey, a distant relative of your own, and one to whom I had no right unsought to aspire, because she was a Protestant and I an unfortunate Catholic. But in consequence of her own implorations, and mayhap to avoid what in your estimation would be a worse course, you consented to our nuptials, on, however, conditions which appear to me particularly harassing, and in reference to which I now take the great trouble and greater liberty of calling on you. Sir, to me my religion is everything. I love it in the same proportion that I love my very soul. I love it with the intensity of my love to God, who is the centre of all truth—who is truth. Now, sir, my attachment to my faith has compelled me to come all this way to beseech you to free me from the fetters which in these conditions bind me. My beloved wife, your relative, sir—with your pardon—is on the eve of her confinement. The hard conditions which came with her hand to me require that if her first-born be a son it must be called Hugh—whether daughter or son, it must be baptised and brought up in the Protestant Church. In default, I forfeit the farm and funds which my wife was endowed with, and which forms my principal property. This, sir, I look upon now as a harsh interference with my parental prerogative. True, as a Catholic, I am in no position to urge any such thing, because we poor wretches are denied all social rights, and to suffer our mere existence is considered a stretch of toleration. But I cast myself on your well-known merciful disposition, and implore you to free me from these conditions. If my first-born be a son I will call it Hugh, but ask of me no more. If a daughter, ask of me nothing. Do not, I beseech you, insist that it be sent from its natural protectors to such a nurse as you can get, and do not insist that my dear wife be a Protestant longer than she thinks well of it.'"

The priest paused to take breath, and Brien, who had listened most attentively, sighed, "Oh, he is the last man to grant this—all this. It makes me fearful to think of it."

"But remember what depends upon the success. First, your child's eternal welfare—your wife's. Duty requires you to do all that is possible; that done, leave the rest with God. Again, the temporal prospects of your children depends upon it. Your brother's will says distinctly, that unless your first-born be baptised in the Catholic Church, and reared in it, he shall not inherit a stiver of the legacy which he will otherwise come in for. He must, too, be called after him."

"That we can do if it be a boy, for my brother's name was Hugh too. Oh, if I could only manage to make the bigotry of both meet! Why did my brother, too, make conditions?"

"Your brother was right. His were not extortionate conditions."

"Knowing how I was circumstanced, I would call them so."

"Hush, the motives of the dead should be sacred. Hush, and go. God's peace be with you. Amen."

The farmer took an affecting leave, and with tearful eye turned him upon his journey. Father Foley retraced his steps in the soberest mood, muttering continued benedictions, and never once venturing to look again at his departing friend. Poor O'Hegan—followed by a labourer who mournfully bore the farmer's travelling bundle, and accompanied by almost all his neighbours who were to escort him for miles—strode out of his little domain with a more courageous stride than marked his motions while his mind was undergoing Father Foley's instructions; once again he turned to glance in the direction of that home which held the fondest of wives, from whom he had now taken the *first* adieu since she and he were wed. As he looked, he beheld a female figure on the hillock near the house waving a white flag. It was more than enough: he tarried no more, but in this trifling incident gathered fresh nerve, and walked steadily forth. Did he look as long as he could be distinguished from that spot, the same food for his fiery spirit was procurable. He needed it not, and prudently dreading, he guarded against the effect of becoming too deeply affected. Travellers then, as much as travellers now, endeavoured to be as unencumbered as possible. Brien had barely in his simply-constructed knapsack what answered the simplest necessities, and he was desirous to keep his mind as far free from unnecessary burdens.

Thus he set out, six weeks before he has been introduced to the reader as he returned. He was gloomy, as gloomy as the state of the weather at the moment, and no two passed each other during the day who did not, on exchanging greetings, add, "A gloomy day this."

Great was the greeting which welcomed Brien O'Hegan back from Dublin. So unexpected was the time of his return, that, except the dogs who ran forth howling their joy, no one had gone to meet him even the length of the *boureen;* and the gloominess of the day saved him from the extra polite attentions of his affectionate neighbours. But no sooner did intelligence of his presence spread than every inmate of the farm-house, except his wife, was abroad and about him. In the first outbursts of welcome no one read the disappointment visible in his face, and no one cared to do so when the excitement abated a little. From side to side, from hand to hand, from embrace to embrace, the poor man was tossed until he found himself, almost fainting, cast into his own straw-bottomed chair beside a cheerful fire in his sitting-room. All the questions that poured in upon him about his health, about how he came, how he went, and what he had seen? to no one and to nothing could he reply. Fatigue, the feelings inseparable from disappointment, and the sudden gladness such as he had since his return, produced a stupor, and he was consigned without resistance to bed, in a room which was usually devoted to the use of Father Foley, or any other of his cloth who happened to be passing; for in those days the priest was an illegal and ill-conditioned member of society, but always an honoured and a welcome guest in a Catholic's home.

Brien's disordered strength and distressed mind for a moment shut out from his perception the absence of his beloved one. So far exhaustion served him, and, most probably, her too. Had he noticed that every embrace was still not hers—that she, in short, was absent when all others so boisterously declared their presence, he would have been doubly distracted—he might have acted rashly. Had he observed how cautiously he was borne into a bed which was never used by him, he would have demanded why or not to act so patiently—he would have run to ascertain himself. Thanks to the chances of his hard-sped journey, the consequences likely to result from the man's natural impetuosity were averted.

He lay on the priest's bed not awake and yet not asleep—that perplexing torpor the wearied enjoy was his. Around him grouped men and women—his friends or "retainers." The shout of welcome which stunned his eager ears outside had subsided into a suspicious whisper. No event of little moment was taking place. Every eye was turned inquiringly towards the door, every ear alive to catch some expected sound. Now and again the feeble traveller was watched lest he should dare stir to disturb the harmony necessary at that moment. It was well, though, that he was insensible to the friendly captivity into which he was plunged.

"How iligant it happened," whispered one, "that he went so nicely off in the trance afore he cum to ax 'bout the missis, poor cratier."

"It's the Lor's doings, so 'tis," replied another; "af he got an inkling of it he'd bust the door, or know for what."

"He's mighty onfectionate ontirely I go bail," joined a third; "but that ud be equal to killing wid kindness in arnest, an no mistake."

An important-looking female, with huge bordered cap, here made her appearance. It was the signal for an unanimous "Well?" The chorus had so swollen, that what was intended by each questioner as an individual whisper produced a pretty formidable roar.

"Whist, an be bothered to yez," was the reply.

At once the self-convicted appealers were cowed into silence. By certain signals, certain turns of the eyes, and sundry gesticulations and manipulations, this dame communicated a series of replies to the "Well?" and to other questions which she supposed were ready to pounce out from the gaping mouths of her evidently "sign-read audience." The signals could thus be interpreted by the initiated: "She is hard put; it's one of the stiffest jobs we had this year; don't let the chap in the bed stir for his very life; drop down and ask the Virgin Mother to ease her."

At this last direction every one in the room fell prostrate, and poured forth from their very hearts earnest prayers for the object in view. The huge-capped dame then took her stealthy passage out, satisfied with such a manifestation of piety. So wrapped up in their impromptu devotions did the women become, that they did not observe "the chap in the bed" open his wearied eyelids and glance anxiously about him.

The sight before him was appalling in the extreme. He felt, he knew he was at home. Why in that bed? Why surrounded by praying figures? Could it be that he had fallen into one of those death-like trances, and was actually laid by as dead, these the mourners praying for his soul? How long could he have been there? These questions ran in rapid confusion through his brain. He jumped into the midst of the group, producing among the devotees the utmost consternation.

There is about a religious devotion that which wooes the mind from earth and weds it to the supernatural—most so in the devotion of the Irish peasantry. It is easy to conceive what the kneeling women at first thought, and what the consequences at first were—screaming and its associates. In a moment they recovered, and recaptured the alarmist.

"Come, what's the matter? say at once," demanded Brien.

"As you love her, be asy, asthore," pleaded the oldest woman.

"Who?—my Julia! Let me go, let me go! I must see, I must see what's the matter. I—I—ha!"

A feeble squeak—that of a just born infant—arrested his attention, as it did that of all present. He paused, as if electrified.

"There is the matter, glory be to God!" cried several voices.

Brien smiled, and endeavoured to speak. His smile was ghastly—his muttering was mingled with joy and grief.

"There—and God be praised!—you're a father," cried the voices again. Brien soon resigned himself to their guidance and their congratulations; but leant on the bed with heavy moan when he obtained a short respite.

"Tell me," he sobbed—"tell me—go tell me how *she* is."

"Finely, thanks be to God!" cried the big cap, entering in great glee; "finely, and I wish you joy, Mr. O'Hegan; and I wish you joy of a fine lump of a son—thanks be to God!—as like you as crow is like crow."

"Thanks be to God!" echoed Brien, "and His will not mine be done."

The birth thus ominously heralded, thus coldly received by him whose interest in it had most right to be greatest, was that of him whose history we have undertaken to indite—Hugh O'Hegan.

THE LAST OF THE HOUSE.

By William Pickersgill, Esq.

XIX.

THE PARTY AT THE CLAVERINGS'.

"Well, Fred, as I was saying," pursued Mr. Crumbledust, "be very steady—very industrous, and who knows but what you may become a partner in the firm of Messrs. Worm, Grub, and Co."

"There is not much probability of that," replied Fred, "for neither of the partners has as yet shown a desire to promote the interests of the clerks in the establishment."

"Oh! but they may do, sir—they may do. All in good time."

This conversation took place one night in the drawing-room of Mr. and Mrs. Clavering. The speakers were seated near the fire. Surrounding the table in the centre of the room sat Dr. Dawdle, Mrs. Wallford, and Mr. and Mrs. Clavering. Dawdle and Mrs. Clavering sat opposite

each other, and Mr. Clavering was opposite to Mrs. Wallford. They were playing at whist, and it was the concluding game of the rubber.

The room was handsomely furnished. Elegant damask curtains, suspended from tastefully decorated cornices, were closely drawn before the windows. The chairs were of rosewood, and the cushions corresponded with the curtains. On either side of the fireplace stood a large easy-chair, in one of which sat Mr. Crumbledust. An elegant ottoman, covered with the same material as the window-curtains, stood on one side of the room, and on the opposite side a cheffonier, laden with silver plate and glass. Opposite to the fireplace was placed a piano of the latest style, and seated upon a stool in front of it, and looking over the leaves of some music, sat Kate Wallford. The walls were hung with several pictures well conceived and executed, which Mr. Clavering declared were all by celebrated masters. There was a Morland, a Teniers, a Paul Veronese, a Vandervelde, and I know not what else; but the fact was, the pictures were purely copies from the productions of these much-esteemed masters.

The connexion between the Claverings and the Wallfords had not been suffered altogether to cease since the death of Mr. Wallford, but the truth is, it had been permitted to fall into a very languishing condition. This was attributable to two causes. In the first place, both Mr. and Mrs. Clavering had the greatest horror of poor relations—were fond of style and supporting the dignity of their station. In order to do this, it became necessary to unfasten the few connecting links which still associated them with the Wallfords. They were sorry for Mrs. Wallford—she was a very nice woman; they were sorry for the children; but they were in no degree to be responsible for the extravagance of others. Mr. Wallford had been a vain, foolish man; he had squandered away thousands in nonsensical projects, and his widow and children were left almost destitute. They were not to blame—they had forewarned him; he had disregarded their advice. The consequences must fall upon the heads of those he had left behind him. They had a character to support, and it should be supported; so they strove by gentle degrees to break off, or at least to weaken, the connexion that subsisted between them and the Wallfords.

In the second place, Mrs. Wallford had never had much respect for her *soi-disant* friends. The traits of character which they had exhibited during her husband's lifetime had not displeased and disgusted her less than those which they had exhibited since. When Mr. Wallford was alive, they were servile and troublesome—continually borrowing money—continually asking for favours; since his death, they had been distant and formal, and when they did do aught that could be construed into a favour to Mrs. Wallford, it had been done in a patronising way, and that lady was sometimes reminded of the assistance she had received. Therefore it was that Mrs. Wallford was quite as anxious as the Claverings that the connexion should not be so close as hitherto, and thus it happened that they seldom visited each other, and that the breach which was already made was becoming every day wider and wider.

On the night preceding that on which the party was assembled at the house of the Claverings, the latter had entertained a somewhat large company at their residence, to which, however, the Wallfords had certainly

been invited, but in such a way as to convey to them a hint that a refusal would be more agreeable to them than an acceptance of their invitation. Mrs. Wallford refused, not because she was not cordially invited, but simply because she had an objection to being one of a large and rather fashionable party. The small party in question was, therefore, as Mrs. Clavering pretended, formed entirely to meet Mrs. Wallford's views, and, if possible, to divert her mind from those thoughts with which it was too much in the habit of being haunted.

"I say, Fred," said Mr. Crumbledust, "what time, sir, do you leave the office at night?"

"Sometimes nine—sometimes ten."

"Why, how's that?—can't be busy all that time, sir."

"No—no, we are not busy, but Grub doesn't begin to write his letters till other persons begin to close their offices."

"Are you always so late as that?"

"Sometimes we get away at seven, but very seldom."

"The first time you get away at seven, come along to my house, will you?"

"Certainly."

"I suppose you can make a pen, sir?"

"I expect so."

"I can't see half so well as I used to do—that's the reason I ask you. I always used to make my own pens before."

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Crumbledust, I'll spare you the necessity in future of either making or mending a pen. I'll bring you a lot of fine steel pens."

"I wouldn't use one of 'em if they were gold pens, sir," replied Crumbledust, growing red in the face, as was his custom when he was angry.

Fred saw he had slipped a word, and felt annoyed at the error he had committed.

"To be sure, quills are very useful," said he, in a deprecating tone.

"Can you find anything better than a good quill pen, sir? Steel pens, indeed; another abominable innovation—another salutary change, as it is called. Why is it, sir, I say, that new customs are to be perpetually introduced? Why can't we write with the same instruments as the people of 1710?"

"I believe," said Fred, "that the only reason alleged for their being preferred to quill pens is, that they never require mending, and are better adapted for books."

"Sir, if you preach to me till to-morrow at this time you can never make me believe it. It's laziness, sir—laziness; people don't like to be troubled to mend their pens. I dare say they would much rather if the pens would write without their assistance. As for their being better adapted for keeping books, another delusion, another idle, trumpery story to justify the use of them. I have kept books, sir, for years, and I can now produce 'em, and I'll undertake to say that they are more legibly and more neatly written than any which have been written by a steel pen. A good goose quill, sir, and a steady hand are all that were employed."

"If I were Grub," resumed Crumbledust, after a pause, "I would in-

tardict the use of 'em in my office. I wouldn't suffer a clerk to use one, sir—not one."

Mr. Crumbledust's excited manner had for a moment drawn the attention of the company towards him, but when it had in some degree become appeased, they reverted to their several occupations.

"One, two, three—three by cards," said Dr. Dawdle, "and two by honours; we're game. Ha! ha! beat you again, Clavering; that concludes the rubber. Now, Mrs. Clavering, are we to have another?"

"I shall leave that to Mrs. Wallford," said that lady.

"Oh! pray do not consult me," said Mrs. Wallford; "make it agreeable to yourselves."

Mrs. Clavering was not disposed to play again, so she said,

"I promised we would not keep you late."

"What is the hour?" inquired Mrs. Wallford.

"Half after ten."

"Oh! then I am sure you must excuse us."

"Oh! but you shall not go till you have had a little supper," said Mrs. Clavering, and she rang the bell. "Well, Kate, my love," she continued, crossing over to that young lady, "and have you finished your examination of the music?"

"Nearly so."

"Is there anything that pleases you?"

"Oh! yes, there are two or three very charming and popular songs."

"Well, my dear, you can have the loan of them, if you wish."

"Thank you, I am very much obliged."

"*Apropos* of cards, Clavering," said Dr. Dawdle, "can you answer me a question that I can propose thereanent?"

"That all depends upon the nature of the question."

"Are you at all familiar with the doctrine of chances?"

"I know the general principles, I think."

"Very well. I place this pack in a bag. I shake them together. I place my hand in the bag to draw out a particular card—say the ace of spades, for instance—what would be the odds against my drawing the card, eh?"

"I should say fifty-two to one."

"Very good. Then what would be the odds against my drawing an ace of any other description?"

"Thirteen to one."

"Right again. Now I see you understand something of the nature of the doctrine. I shall, therefore, propound another question. What would be the odds against my drawing four cards from the bag in the following order—the first, the king of hearts; the second, the queen of clubs; the third, the knave of spades; the fourth, the queen of diamonds?"

"There you beat me, sir."

"Why, you are easily vanquished. I'll show you, however, how to make the calculation. In the first——"

Dr. Dawdle had proceeded thus far when the servant announced supper, which was at once the signal for a removal to another room.

"I had no idea of staying to supper, Mrs. Clavering," said Crumble-

dust, "or I would never have come, ma'am. I've not been out of my house these ten years so late as this. My housekeeper will scold me well, I know."

"I will bear the blame," said Mrs. Clavering.

"I am much afraid, madam," said Crumbledust, "that Mrs. Wegg will say that I alone am to blame, and it's my opinion she will not be very far wrong."

"Well, an occurrence of this kind doesn't often happen," said Clavering.

"It little need, sir—it little need," Crumbledust replied.

During supper, the conversation turned upon Mrs. Wallford's lodger.

"I hear strange accounts of that Mr. Horncastle," said Clavering, looking towards Mrs. Wallford. "I am told he is a very satirical and disagreeable person."

"His temper appears to have been soured from some cause," said Mrs. Wallford.

"Who is he?" inquired Dawdle. "What does he do?"

"I know nothing further," answered Mrs. Wallford, "than that his name is Horncastle, and that he appears to have sufficient to live upon."

"I have been told that he is very rich," said Clavering.

"He does not live like one who is rich, I am sure," said Kate Wallford. "He buys the coarsest food, and wouldn't eat it hot, I believe, for any consideration. He says it goes further when it is eaten cold."

"The man wishes to pay his way," said Crumbledust, "and who has any business with what he does?"

"He is a miser, Mr. Crumbledust," said Fred, vehemently, "and I believe a misanthropist into the bargain."

"He has got a devilish bad name, however," observed Dawdle.

"Perhaps without deserving it," observed Crumbledust.

This subject continued on the *tapis* till the guests took their departure.

XX.

THE VIGILS OF HORNCASTLE.

The incidents which Broadface had related to Horncastle regarding the preternatural visitation at the Old Hall, had excited considerable curiosity in the latter, who (although he strove to conceal it) was evidently greatly interested in the proceedings. It is impossible to say what degree of truth he attached to the various statements he had heard, but he appeared to be greatly affected by many of them.

A few days after his interview with Broadface he determined to devote a night himself to the Old Hall, with a view, if possible, of discovering a clue to the nocturnal disturbances which had excited throughout the neighbourhood such general terror and alarm. In order that this might be done with secresy, he resolved upon disclosing his project to no person.

"Mrs. Wallford," he said, when it was time to betake himself to the house, "I shall not return to-night. I have locked my chamber door, and I have the key in my pocket. I shall return to-morrow some time. I have business on hand that calls me away."

"Oh! very well."

The night was dark and cold, and few persons were in the street as the old man hurried on towards the place where he intended to pass the night. He had in his hand a thick stick, and had taken the precaution to put a few crusts of bread in his pocket, lest hunger should visit him before the morning. From what he had learned, it appeared there was no certainty at any time of seeing anything unusual in the house, for the visitations were very irregular—sometimes, indeed, weeks and months intervening without anything being seen, and sometimes the apparition being seen several nights in succession. When he had reached the beginning of the avenue that branches off from the high road and leads to the Hall, he paused, and for a few moments began to reflect upon the project he had in view. He was not a man, indeed, who placed any faith in spiritual visitations: he was one of those persons who hold it a mark of ignorance and barbarism to be a believer in such a doctrine. Nevertheless, the various statements which had been made to him had considerably perplexed him, and rendered him only the more anxious to find a satisfactory solution to the mystery. He took, however, a very rational view of the matter. If the place was not haunted, the probability was that it had become a place of refuge for persons of evil character, who had used every means in their power to inspire a feeling of horror and alarm throughout the neighbourhood, for the purpose of promoting their own wicked and dishonest purposes. If this, indeed, were really the case, he ran the risk, in case of being discovered, of being murdered, for if he were detected, there did not appear to be the least doubt that that would be his fate. It was, of course, out of the question to suppose that he could make any resistance. He was a weak, infirm old man, and might be overcome without much difficulty.

These thoughts passed through the mind of the old man as he paused to contemplate the enterprise he had in hand. The night was so dark that he could not see a finger before him, and the long avenue which stretched itself beyond was enshrouded in the deepest gloom.

He determined to proceed, and accordingly quitted the main road and walked along the avenue. The night was still and calm, and the hour was already late. It was eleven o'clock before he had gained the end of the avenue, and saw the dark outlines of the building looming through the gloom. It would be difficult to describe the feelings which agitated his bosom as he approached it. It was the second time he had visited it for many years, yet the locality was familiar to him.

"Noble edifice," apostrophised the old man, "what gay throngs have been assembled within your walls—what sounds of mirth and revelry have these woods re-echoed—what graceful forms, fairy-like, have flitted across your deserted chambers—what sparkling eyes have shed their lustre on the festive scene. Where are they? Where are those 'old familiar faces' that used to beam with such joy and kindness? Some are dead—some changed—some absent. Where is he who was the heir to the estate—the descendant of the illustrious house? He is dead—dead to the world."

When the old man had finished his apostrophe he walked up and down the space in front of the Hall for upwards of an hour. During the whole of the time his eyes were fixed upon the windows, and he paid the

greatest attention to catch any sounds that might issue from the Hall. He neither heard nor saw anything. He resolved to force an entrance into the house, for he conceived that his chance would be infinitely greater of seeing the apparition within than by remaining without. Broadface had told him how he and his companion had effected an entrance, and, glad to profit by the information, he hastened to the back part of the building, and in the course of a little time stood beneath the roof of this desolate and mysterious mansion. He groped his way along the corridor, and having ascended several flights of stairs directed his steps to the "Tapestried Chamber," in which place he had learned the spectre had most frequently presented itself. He had not yet attempted to light the candle which he carried with him, in consequence of the currents of air that swept through the various rooms and passages of the building. Broadface had pointed out to him so distinctly the way that led to this chamber, that it was no wonder that he found it without any difficulty. When he arrived at the door of the chamber he paused before he ventured to enter. As I have already intimated, he was not superstitious; nevertheless, the character of the place, the unaccountable stories he had heard, and the darkness in which everything was enshrouded, threw a damp upon his spirits, and caused him to falter and tremble a little before he crossed the threshold.

The door of the chamber was closed. He pressed his hand against it, but it was firm. He turned the handle, but still it did not yield. He tried the operation a second, a third time, and at length the door flew open. He walked in. The room was hung as we have previously described, and no article of furniture appeared to have been removed since Broadface and Rough had been there. Horncastle took a piece of cloth from the floor and placed it in front of the window in order to exclude the air, and to prevent his candle, which he had lighted, from being blown out. There was nothing in the room to cause him the least alarm. He drew aside the curtains of the bed, but the object which had so alarmed Broadface was not to be seen. He began to suspect that that individual had been deceived by his childish fears, and had conjured up things which existed only in his over-excited imagination. Horncastle examined the wainscoting behind the black drapery to see if there were any secret panel by which an ingress into the room could be obtained. He, however, discovered no indication of one, so if he were exposed to any intrusion, he conceived that the intruder must effect his entrance by the door. He placed his candle in a tin tube, which he fastened in the floor, and sat down to await any visitation that might occur. The candle was a common rushlight, and the chamber being spacious, it threw a sickly gleam over the place. He had been seated half an hour without anything having occurred, when, in order to relieve the monotony of his vigils, he got up and walked to the window. The night was still thick and dark—not a star was to be seen in the heavens—not a light of any description was visible.

He walked several times across the floor, partly to beguile the time and partly that the exercise might impart some warmth to his frame. He had been employed in this way about ten minutes, when he fancied he heard the tones of an instrument, which appeared to be at some distance. He listened attentively; the music was exceedingly sweet, and the taste

and execution of the performer chaste and accurate. The instrument appeared to be a lute, but it was impossible to say with any degree of certainty. It was also difficult to say whether the performer was within the house or in the open air; if the latter was the case, the music, perhaps, was produced by natural causes, although there was certainly not much likelihood of a person indulging his taste for music at that hour of the night.

Horncastle now evinced a species of uneasiness and alarm of which he had hitherto given no indications. He turned pale and trembled violently. He listened with greedy ear to the sounds, and fancied that every moment they became more and more distinct. The performer was evidently approaching, and he fully anticipated that ere many minutes elapsed he should be exposed to an intrusion of some description, but what the character of the visitor might be it was difficult to form a conception. When the sounds, however, had become so audible as to indidicate that the musician could not be more than a few yards distant, they gradually died away, and Horncastle heard them no more.

He grew tired of pacing up and down the chamber, and again sat down. He pulled some of the dry crusts of bread from his pocket and devoured them with avidity.

It might probably be about one o'clock, when he heard some pattering of feet upon the stairs. The sounds grew more distinct. He became ghastly pale, and large drops of perspiration suddenly settled upon his brow. Hitherto, as we have said, he had put little faith in supernatural agency; he was now, however, entirely overcome by his fear—he trembled as though he had the ague, and began to blame himself for thus exposing himself to danger when there was little necessity for his doing so. He had been a foolish man—he had been too much carried away by the prevailing opinions of the day as to matters of this kind—he had not reflected well upon the subject—he had forgotten that people of all ages and of all nations had implicitly believed in spirits—he had forgotten that some of the greatest men, some of the brightest intellects, had subscribed to the vulgar opinion, as it is called. This was strong evidence in favour of a doctrine which many professed to ridicule and to treat with indifference.

The pattering of feet became more audible, and the old man sat with the most breathless anxiety awaiting the issue. He had seated himself in front of the door, so that he might gain, as soon as possible, a sight of the intruder, and also be in a position to make a retreat, should the emergency of the case require it.

A portion of the black drapery was at length thrown aside, and a short figure, clad in grey, and bearing in its hand a taper, steadily advanced into the chamber. The figure was bent, as though from age and infirmity. It had no sooner presented itself than the old man quickly rose up, made an attempt to grasp it, and fell his full length upon the floor.

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

XXXVIII.

In the mean while the Templars languished in the dungeons of Paris, filling them to suffocation. They were, for the most part, laden with chains, and otherwise treated with indignity and great cruelty. More respect had, however, been observed towards the grand master and Guy d'Auvergne than the other knights, the prisons assigned them being at the top of a lofty tower, light and airy, though deficient in comfort; a straw litter, a three-legged stool, a deal table, and a *bahut*, or trunk, being all the furniture they contained. In Jaques Molay's apartment, which was immediately over that tenanted by the dauphin, a small door opened upon what, from its size and appearance, might be termed a recess in the wall. This hole was occupied by Sachet, his cook, the only attendant he had been permitted to retain.

Indignation had roused the grand master from that senile apathy which nature in mercy grants as a faint compensation for withdrawing the sense of joy from man in his declining years. But this re-awakening to the struggles of life was forced and unnatural; and during his short confinement the old man seemed to have added another year to his existence. His frame became daily more attenuated; but death, so often confronted on the battle-field and in the lonely defiles of distant lands, was still denied him. The spirit seemed detained in the sinking form by a higher agency for some hidden though wise purpose. Privations alone could hardly subdue a nature tempered by the hardships of war; but it is surprising that the spirit, chafed and wearied with this unnatural excitement, did not at once burst the weak bonds that fettered it to the perishing clay.

But so it was—Jaques Molay yet lived; and, what is stranger still, yet hoped; and his confidence increased as weeks grew to months without bringing any change to his situation. He enjoyed, indeed, a solace which had been denied to the other dignitaries of the Order, and which had been conceded to his dignity and the exalted rank of Guy d'Auvergne. The friends were allowed access to each other at certain times and under certain restrictions; so that they frequently indulged in long and undisturbed converse; but this circumstance could scarcely account for Molay's hopefulness, since the dauphin by no means shared the feeling.

On such occasions Jaques Molay, in a half-recumbent posture on his straw pallet, and the Prior of Normandy upright on the stool opposite him, now bending their heads in pious meditation, their beads gliding through their fingers, now breaking these devotional reveries with remembrances of past combats when, side by side, they fought and conquered as now they suffered and endured together, regretted, as men are wont to do

under such circumstances, errors long lost sight of, and discussed the probable issue of their present difficulties.

Thus summer and winter passed away for the old brothers in arms, the one hopeful the other desponding; and spring again brought verdure to the fields, but no change to the captives. One morning, as the mild rays of the sun broke through the prison windows, as though to greet gladly the aged man with the promise of another summer, throwing a bright light on his silvery hair and long flowing beard, but seeking in vain to glitter in the orbs that time had dimmed, the Grand Prior of Normandy, somewhat earlier than usual, was ushered and locked in with his friend.

Sachet, who within the doorway of his closet stood gazing wistfully at his master as a faithful hound will do, drew back within his own narrow limits on the prior's entrance, closing the door behind him more from a feeling of delicacy than from any other motive, since the friends had no desire to exclude him from their conference.

"How sweet," observed Guy d'Auvergne, "is this feeling of reviving nature."

"Ay, to those who can be sensible of it," answered Jaques Molay, with a faint smile. "I have ceased to feel the change of the seasons. The sap rises not in the ancient tree—it stands bare and leafless in the forest whilst all others bud around it—it bears no outward token of the life that still lingers within. I have trusted with every blast that the old, worthless trunk would break. But no! One more summer lies before me. Next autumn, perchance, I may fall with the leaves—then I shall be at rest—at rest, D'Auvergne. When the day is spent what else remains?"

"True," said D'Auvergne, musingly—"most true; our day is over, come what will. And yet to me spring feels pleasant, though life does not—life on eight sols per diem!"

A bitter laugh escaped him; but it was so instantaneously suppressed that it scarcely seemed to come from his sternly compressed lips.

"Eight sols for you and me," said Jaques Molay; "but our brethren get not the value of four sols a day. They want light, and air, and food, D'Auvergne; and if the spring cheers and warms your blood, methinks such thoughts should check its flow."

"It has been frozen in my veins before now, when I have counted the hours until that one struck when the brothers were to be led to that fearful chamber!" said Guy d'Auvergne, deep gloom settling on his brow, sad enough before. "You are right, father. There is no spring and no summer, no sunshine and no peace, henceforth, for the Templar. When cast in bondage by the infidel he might hope to escape or prepare to meet an honourable death—receive the praise or profit by the prayers of the sorrowing brothers that survived; but here escape is impossible and disgrace inevitable! We shall be destroyed root and branch."

"Has no one, then, the courage to plead our cause?" exclaimed Jaques Molay. "I thought we had reason to hope that, at last, one of the clericals had obtained leave to clear our Order from all the foul imputations cast upon it? I think I gathered as much from our enemies themselves, but my memory sadly fails me at times. Surely God will not permit brave knights to be accused, tried, and condemned by the same

persons without being given one fair chance—nay, men will not stand by and quietly witness such injustice."

"It is even so," said the dauphin. "Some friends who have managed, with great difficulty, to get access to my prison, have assured me, that even the mere outward show, the shadow or semblance of justice, was thought unnecessary in our case—we are as a mere prey in the fangs of our devourers."

"Holy Virgin and St. Bernard grant me patience!" exclaimed Jaques Molay, restlessly shifting on his straw, whilst D'Auvergne continued, with increasing bitterness:

"Can that be called a fair tribunal whose heads are such as Philip of Marigny, brother to Enguerrand, our deadliest foe?—all creatures of the king and that unholy Pope, who sends here a cardinal, forsooth! to assist in casting shame on the faith in the face of the laity—to see the temporal power strike down the spiritual? The measure is as wise as it is just! Shame and scorn on that Cardinal of Alba, whose name has sounded so often like a death-knell in the ears of our tortured brethren! Curse the slave that bears it!—but no," he added, with curling lip and flashing eye—"no—the hound but obeys the master's leash! Our accuser—our judge—our assassin, are all to be found in one and the same person—the king himself."

"Philip of France!—Philip!" cried in a loud voice the grand master; then, after a short pause, he added: "True, most true. Therefore do I still trust in better things. Our Order, though dissolved, may one day form again under happier auspices. We may yet live to clear our honour and recover some of our property."

D'Auvergne laughed—the startling, low, bitter laugh that anguish had taught him.

"My poor, poor friend," he said, "how often will you recur to that delusion? Our wealth has fallen into the hands of our oppressors, and you still hope for life?—I tell you we are doomed men!"

"It cannot be!" said Molay. "I hope nought for myself—for me, all is over—nay, all was over long ere now; but I cannot, will not believe Philip capable of this great crime. Why, on the fatal day of Mons-en-Puelle we fought side by side. The beauseant and oriflame mingled their folds together over the carnage. I never left the king's side a single instant; my men and horses were left to perish in the morass, my only care being to shield his person and secure his retreat. We were brothers in arms that day. I have since been sponsor to his infant son. Our moneys were his at the hour of need—in time of peril our walls and our strength protected him. Guy, Guy, can he forget these things? Can he, remembering them, shed our blood? I cannot, I will not believe it."

The dauphin shook his head sadly, but made no reply. A long pause ensued. At last, as if rousing himself from a painful train of thought, he recurred to a former part of their discourse.

"I have heard for certain," he said, "that Peter of Boulogne, undaunted by the danger attending so bold a step, demanded in so positive a manner to speak in our defence, that they dared not refuse him. He pleaded that men like us, who knew neither Latin, nor reading, nor writing of any kind, were entirely at the mercy of those who took down our spoken words in a language and in characters equally unknown to us."

"Well," said Molay, raising his head—"well, this seems fair enough."

"Ay—but I am sure he soon saw how hopeless was his task, and that he has voluntarily resigned it."

"The hound!" exclaimed Molay.

"Judge not our brother too hastily, good father. What could he do? He might *speak* Latin to them, but they *wrote it down*; and on these written records shall we be judged now and hereafter."

"May their lying pens be turned to spits to roast them with in hell!" exclaimed Sachet, who now approached his master with his basin of soup, which he presented with the utmost ceremony, though it was served in the earthen pot in which it had been cooked, for their kitchen utensils were not abundant. "May they roast in hell; and be basted with the foul ink with which they write their calumnies!"

"Amen!" responded the knights, with, perhaps, but too hearty a grace; their ideas partaking too much of the rudeness of the camp to be shocked at such an explosion.

"He was always too wise for us, that Peter of Boulogne," said D'Auvergne. "Had we listened to him—but it is idle to regret the irretrievable past—had we always followed his advice our Order had never been stranded on this coast of disgrace and dishonour! Alas, alas! the foul aspersions our enemies scribble against us now will be graved on history's page for after generations to wonder at us."

"It maddens me to think of it," replied Jaques Molay. "Old as I am, could I but challenge Philip to the lists, with God to judge between us, I know, Guy, my weak arm would be nerved with a giant's strength, and our innocence would appear clear as noonday."

"Fair arms and a fair field!" said the dauphin, "dream not of it; Philip knows better than to grant us so much."

At that moment the key grated in the heavy lock, slowly revolving many times before the clumsy contrivance gave way, when several men became visible. Only two of them, however, entered the chamber, which was, indeed, too small to contain the others. Leaving the door open, that those in the passage might command the whole interior, they advanced with solemnity towards the captives, without showing them the slightest mark of respect. The dauphin seemed to feel this want of courtesy more than his companion: drawing himself up with hauteur, he eyed sternly the new comers. One wore the costume of a scrivener, and held a roll of parchment, to which was appended sundry seals apparently of bees'-wax; the other, by his dress, was evidently a Church dignitary.

After a silence of some duration the priest motioned to the scribe, who unrolled the parchment and began to read thence, in Latin, the prolix sentence of the illustrious captives, including several more of the high dignitaries of the Order. Unconscious as children of the meaning of the harmonious sounds that fell on their ears, the grand master and the dauphin with folded arms endured the infliction to an end.

"You have now heard your condemnation," said the priest, "as it has been indited."

"In the same manner as we heard the depositions made in our names," said Molay, grimly. "Ay—heard is the word, and much the wiser are we for it."

"This is all the law allows you; but the Church does not forget that, though unworthy of, you once belonged to her—she has mercy for the most erring of her children. The Cardinal of Alba and the Bishop of Senlis have permitted a summary of your sentence to be vulgarised for your benefit."

"We owe the Church our thanks," said Molay, drily; "we would profit by the indulgence of her emissaries."

The scribe then unfolding a lesser document commenced reading, in the French language, a long list of names, beginning with the popes, and the kings, and their respective representatives, when Guy d'Auvergne leant over Jaques Molay and whispered in his ear:

"Whatever transpires, I conjure you, by the cross, to remain calm. I will tell you later why."

Jaques Molay made an almost imperceptible motion with his head.

Legal phrases were more ambiguous in those remote days than in ours; and what was read in French was nearly as unintelligible to the knights as it had been in Latin. When they were, at last, made to understand that they were convicted on the charge of malefice, Jaques Molay bounded on his pallet; but glancing towards Guy d'Auvergne, and perceiving that beyond the sign of the cross, which he hastily made on his brow and breast, he suppressed every outward sign of emotion, the grand master commanded himself though his frame trembled with passion.

The scribe in his monotonous voice continued to read the dissolution of the Order and the confiscation of its goods, when a groan burst from the old man; but as the document, passing from general to personal matters, proceeded to say that Jaques Molay, grand master of the Order, and Guy, dauphin of Auvergne, knight commander of the priory in Normandy, were condemned to perpetual imprisonment, a faint smile flitted across his lips—a smile that said how vain was such a sentence, how short must be his captivity! The soul would flit away—no mortal hand could arrest it. But his eye lighting on the dauphin, the smile was succeeded by a look of deep concern. He was old, and could not live much longer; but was his noble friend to pine away his days like a caged eagle? Then hope suggested that time would soothe many prejudices, persecution would cease when jealousy was lulled and avarice glutted; and the old man's mind was fast running over every chance that might yet spring up in favour of his Order and his friend, when the scrivener's concluding words recalled his wandering thoughts.

Previous to their final imprisonment, they, and a few more scarcely inferior in rank, were expected, on a scaffold erected for that purpose opposite to Notre Dame, to make a confession to the people of Paris of their heinous crimes and offences, crave pardon for the same of God and man, and acknowledge the justice of their sentence; in order that by public penance they might make some amends for the scandal they had caused, and prove themselves deserving of the leniency that spared their worthless lives.

As the scrivener read these words, the priest watched the captives' countenances narrowly to discover the impression they produced; but his penetration was baffled. The eyes of both the knights sought the ground, and their features were impassible. This was so rare an occurrence with the unfortunate Templars, who throughout had shown them-

selves mere rough, untaught soldiers, and by no means a match for the tonsured clergy, that the ecclesiastic was puzzled; nor did this reserve seem to him of good augury. The document being ended, however, he crossed himself and said "Amen!" The group in the passage caught up the accent in solemn echo; Jaques Molay and Guy d'Auvergne bowed their heads in silence.

"You acknowledge, then, the justice of this decree?" said the priest, severely.

"We are not in a condition to dispute it," said the grand master, evasively.

At a sign from his superior the scribe, with a low reverence, withdrew, and closed the door behind him. The moment they were alone the priest resumed:

"You ought, then, to acknowledge its mercy and the respect shown to your rank, which has protected your limbs from the rack, and prevented their being disgraced with fetters."

"It is sufficient, methinks," said Jaques Molay, "that we languish in this misery. Had Boniface still occupied the papal chair, the king would not have dared to proceed so far; but Clement is his unworthy creature, and betrays the Church in the persons of its soldiers."

"I am no great politician," said Guy d'Auvergne; "but sure am I that the Pope has suffered his best shield and lance to be broken in our Order."

"The first duty of the Church is to eradicate from its bosom what taints its purity."

"We will waive that question," said Guy d'Auvergne, haughtily; "it boots not arguing when the argument is between the judge and the condemned. The Saracens have more knightly feelings in their pagan breasts than our Christian tormentors. They, at least, leave their wretched captives the solace of silent commune with themselves."

"I understand you, dauphin," said the priest, drawing himself up; "but," he added, with proud humility, "in the performance of my duty as a servant of the Church, I am prepared to meet every kind of contumely. My chief errand to you is to move your souls to repentance, to offer you the consolations of our faith."

"We confess to none but those of our Order," said Guy d'Auvergne, with the stern composure he had maintained throughout.

"Ay, that wretched ambition of yours survives even your fall!" the priest exclaimed, rapidly losing his temper. "You must, forsooth, have a clergy of your own—chapels and churches of your own—and withdraw the wonted supplies from their legitimate courses. Besotted fools! could you not see that such presumption would be your ruin?"

"We have of late learnt that lesson," said Guy, bitterly.

"However, rest satisfied—King Philip will reap but little by your extermination," continued the priest. "The Pope has sent hither those who will take care that what belongs to the Church, return to the Church. But I would not speak of that—I would turn your hearts that you may not forfeit the grace of Heaven as you have that of man. I see, however, that this language touches you but little. You have been so long intimate with paynims that you are become half pagan yourselves; I will, therefore, speak the language of self-interest, which the most

hardened sinners understand. If to-morrow, when you are led to the scaffold to perform public penance, you show a spirit becoming your temporal and spiritual affliction, and acknowledge your manifold crimes and the justice of your sentence, I doubt not but that the circumstance will weigh greatly in your favour both with the Pope and the king, and may mitigate your hard sentence. Not only may your confinement be more luxurious and less solitary, but you may, ultimately, be restored to freedom and to honour. I can assure you—and I have it from the most direct source—that the king's indignation will be softened by such behaviour."

"We understand," said Molay. "Having despoiled the Temple, he would have us justify him in the eyes of the world."

The bluntness of the knight threw the diplomatic priest for the moment off his guard; but he instantly recovered himself.

"And were it so—were this penance—this public avowal a mere stroke of policy, what good do you think would result to you from the defeating it? Do you think you are less at the king's mercy now than you will be then? If you incense him, remember it will be at your peril, for you are wholly in his power; but if you pleasure him, there is no saying to what extent he may stretch his favour towards you. If you argue that his sincerity may be doubted, he has already proved to you that it is not safe to brave him—besides, what is a word more or less; your signed depositions will endure throughout time."

"Has the king commissioned you to persuade us to this step?" asked Jaques Molay.

"I am not authorised to answer questions, but to put them," said the priest, haughtily.

"We have heard you," said Guy d'Auvergne, "and will reflect upon the matter."

"Bethink you, also, that the Pope would protect you even if the king should not—his arm extends far enough to reach you even in these dungeons; and remember, you have been found guilty by the commission appointed by his Holiness."

"Ay, and that he must needs be justified also," said Jaques Molay.

"The Church needs no justification," said the priest, coldly.

"But the Bishop of Senlis does, and so does the Cardinal of Alba," said Guy d'Auvergne, looking fixedly at the priest.

"They have been in this affair but the insignificant instruments of the Divine will—besides," continued the ecclesiastic, darting a fiery look at the dauphin, "the Cardinal of Alba comes of a house which, neither in the Church nor out of it, courts the opinion of men. I leave you to weigh my words in your consciences, if you still retain any."

"And to con over the kind advice of the Cardinal of Alba," said Guy d'Auvergne, rising and by a courteous inclination showing that he had recognised his interlocutor. The cardinal, in some confusion, took his leave with strained ceremony and obvious malice.

"There goes one of our enemies' base tools!" said Jaques Molay, falling back on his pallet.

The dauphin turned his dark eyes, full of meaning, upon the grand master, whose pale orbs returned the gaze. Then each simultaneously held out his hand; a firm grasp was exchanged between them, but they made no further comment on the cardinal's visit.

XXXIX.

In a low damp vault, at the foot of that same tower, where scarce a ray of light and no sound of life could cheer him, Almeric d'Aulnoy was lingering out his days without being able to count them.

His situation was wretched indeed; but his own misery weighed with him as nothing in comparison with what his follies, and the follies of such as he, had wrought on others. His brethren in chains, his Order disgraced, and Margot a prey to wild despair, were images which the darkness of his cell could not exclude from his mental vision, nor was he even in sleep delivered from the accusing images which remorse conjured up around him. Often, too, would he lay the livelong night tossing to and fro on his miserable pallet, in vain courting slumber, a prey to that fever of the mind which threatened to corrode the very springs of life.

In common with all his younger brethren he was loaded with fetters; nor had he been spared the torture. The refinement of cruelty developed by justice in those days is well known; and the heroism with which, in many instances, it was borne by the unfortunate Templars is the most painful episode in their history.

On the morning, and at the same hour, when the Cardinal of Alba visited the grand master and the dauphin, a monk of the Dominican Order entered Almeric's dungeon. A small loophole at the top of the low wall admitted so dim a light that to the monk's unaccustomed eyes it seemed in total darkness, but, guided by the clank of the fetters as D'Aulnoy attempted to rise on his entrance, he advanced cautiously. By degrees his vision became clearer, until he could almost distinguish the matted locks, haggard look, and colourless, hollow cheek that made the young Templar but a shadow of his former self. Sitting on the foul pallet beside him, and gathering up his robes so as to contaminate them as little as possible—for the moisture from the walls had completely soaked the straw—he endeavoured to bring his mind to bear solely on the object of his visit. But the chill and loathsome atmosphere overcame him, and with all his efforts it was some time ere he could control his thoughts. D'Aulnoy, long accustomed to the faint light, could observe the working of his unwelcome visitor's every feature, and had ample leisure to form conjectures as to his motive in thus intruding upon him. He was the first to break silence.

"More inquiries—more confessions—more tortures!" he exclaimed, bitterly. "Speak your errand, good father; surely such rigour is superfluous now."

"My errand is one of consolation, and surely you are in need of it—your comforts are scanty here, indeed!" said the monk, with a shudder.

"Ay," said D'Aulnoy, "this cloak is my only shield against the moisture that drops from these walls day and night incessantly; and black bread is my daintiest fare,—glad am I when it is not forgotten."

"Your condition is hard; but your sins were great, my son."

"Mine were great, as you say, father; but I am not a hardened sinner. I have seen the evil of my ways; above all, I have repented of the evil I brought upon others; but all that is over now and past remedy."

"I know you are not one of the most hardened of your brotherhood," said the monk, "and therefore am I here to-day."

"I have been feeble and worthless throughout," said the young man. "I make no secret of it. I took my vows without knowing what I did, and broke them recklessly. Too weak to resist passion, I have proved myself weaker still in my conflict with pain; and God and the saints know how I perjured myself on the rack! I had not even the strength of evil! Unable to act rightly, I could not even manfully bear up under adversity! I have brought shame on my Order, and driven her I love to despair! Think you further penance is necessary when remorse is at my heart preying upon it day and night?"

"This is indeed a dark, lone abode to dwell in with such thoughts as you describe. I own it struck me painfully after feeling the bright, sunny atmosphere without."

"Is it, then, so bright a day?" asked the youth, despondingly.

"The heaven is blue—the sun refulgent—the air mild and tepid," replied the monk.

"All days are alike to me," said D'Aulnoy, with a deep sigh.

"You may soon be restored to light, and air, and more happiness than you have yet known," said the priest; "true repentance opens the gates of Heaven, and sometimes, too, the door of a prison."

"Gladly would I drink in your words, good father, but they are unintelligible."

"You have already admitted the crimes with which you and your brethren are charged."

"I have admitted my own sins, nor have I denied that there were among us those who like me have known love—that some have been guilty of magical practices, worn amulets of Saracenic origin, indulged in wine and wassail, sworn by Bafomet; and all this is true. Many were perverse, some criminal; but these were all among the younger brothers, and they sinned as much against the Order as against God. There are profane hearts under the cowl—are there not, good father?"

"Ay, but such the Church rejects and punishes with a severe hand."

"Well, father, say we Templars have been rapacious, proud, and insolent in our prosperity, and you will have said the worst of us; but the same may be said of King Philip himself."

"You held other language on the rack, my son."

"Flesh could not bear it," said Almeric, impetuously. "Had they but doomed me to an honourable death I could have met it with courage; but, alas! broken by long captivity and hunger, I was unequal to pain, and proved a traitor to my Order. I am a wretch, father, unworthy of liberty."

"If not for yourself, perhaps there is another for whom you may wish to be free."

A convulsive movement betrayed the young man's emotion.

"The dissolution of the Order is unavoidable," continued the monk. The grand master and all the high dignitaries are condemned to a life-long imprisonment—the lesser knights are permitted, at their pleasure, to enter our Order or that of the Knights Hospitallers. A fair sentence—the Templars will end, as they began, by living on the charity of the Knights of St. John."

A groan escaped the young man.

"But many," continued the wily priest, "will return to the world——"

"And live by the alms of the public," said Almeric, bitterly.

"Or," observed the monk, "under assumed names carve out for themselves other paths to fortune."

The young man turned with the rapidity of lightning towards his interlocutor—a faint flush overspread his features—the monk saw that he had touched the right chord, and that it vibrated to the centre of the captive's soul.

"Many of them will marry," he continued, carelessly.

"Marry, good father!—how is that possible?"

"The Pope will have no reason to refuse dispensation from vows which he no longer can consider binding. Moreover, no one will be able to say who has, or who has not, belonged to the Order—its record will be flung to the four winds of Heaven. Those who are not able to obtain their freedom will remain neglected and forgotten in dungeons such as this."

"How, then, will repentance avail?"

"By an extraordinary extension of mercy an opportunity will be granted you, my son, of working your deliverance. Your having two brothers in the king's household has caused you to be graciously remembered; and you are named among those who are about to perform public penance before the church of Notre Dame. Your candid admissions in the torture-chamber have, I will not deny, weighed greatly in your favour——"

A bitter laugh escaped the young man.

"And so," said he, "we are to do penance in our shirts, like beggars before church doors."

"Not so, my son. You will still be treated as knights and nobles. But the people of Paris have taken a strange notion into their heads—they say the guilt attributed to your Order is not proved."

"Say they so, the good people of Paris?" exclaimed D'Aulnoy, with some of his former impetuosity. "Deem they that confession wrung from the innocent on the rack—starved—drugged—maddened—I know not what—is no proof of the crime imputed to them? God bless them!"

"Those," continued the priest, unmoved by the young man's words, "who will publicly admit the justice of their sentence, and confirm their depositions and confessions made before the tribunal——"

"Never!" exclaimed D'Aulnoy, with energy.

"You are more heroic than your companions in misfortune. The grand master and the dauphin——"

"Will never consent to enact so vile a part," interrupted Almeric.

"They will offer no opposition, rest assured. Indeed, how can the grand master retract confessions which he has himself signed?"

"The grand master sign confessions!—but, like me, he can neither read nor write."

"He has affixed a mark of his own, however, which he will not disavow."*

"And the dauphin—the Prior of Normandy?"

"He and his friend have ever but one mind, my son."

"And will they, too, betray the Order—throw ashes on the place where the Temple stood in its glory?"

"My dear son, they regard their cause as a lost battle. The fortress

* It is said to be a fact that Jaques Molay could not read his depositions, nor sign them otherwise than by his mark.

is in the enemy's hands—the beauseant is down, and the cry is *sauve qui peut*. The choice is between a penitent heart, freedom, a new life; and an impenitent heart, an insolent tongue, and a lifelong abode like this, far away from the ken of man—far from the eye of sympathy. I leave you to reflect and to choose between them. You will not be called up before to-morrow, and you will have my prayers that your heart may be softened and your lips become a fountain of truth."

With these words the monk hurriedly left the cell; for he thought it wiser to leave his communications to work upon the hot imagination of the young man, than, by prolonged argument, to raise in his mind doubt or opposition. As he ascended the stone steps leading to the street, he encountered the cardinal on his return from the chamber above, when a few words were rapidly exchanged between them.

"How did you find your penitent, Father Imbert?" demanded the latter.

"Malleable as wax. He thinks of nothing but ridding himself of all fetters, clerical or mundane; but stop—I am wrong there, for I verily believe he contemplates wedlock. But I have him down in my books; he shall be passed over to the Hospitallers."

"You are confessor there, are you not?"

"Even so. Has your eminence succeeded as well at the top of the tower as I have at the base?"

"The birds up there seem tame enough," replied the cardinal, with a triumphant smile; and with a courteous salutation each took his way.

THE WHITE HAT; OR, A POET'S ADVENTURE.

I WAS a poet once. Much as the confession will damage my reputation, I shall at least gain credit for my frankness; besides, did not Sir E. Bulwer Lytton gain poetic honours at Cambridge, and has not *he* turned out a great man? Why, then, need you condemn or I despair?

It is natural that the discarded of the Muse of Poetry should woo the favour of her sister the Muse of History. If Erato and Thalia are coy, Clio will perchance receive me with open arms: and is not she also the daughter of Jupiter?

Bear with me, then, oh! gentle reader, while I narrate the history of an adventure which happened to me during my flirtation with the fickle divinities of Parnassus. By dint of perseverance and a rhyming dictionary, I had managed a year or two since to fill a quire or two of foolscap with very indifferent verses. Had they been worse, I should have doubtless loved them more; as it was, my affection for my yet unborn offspring prompted me, first to look out for a patron, and having caught one, to rush into print, and burst upon an astonished and electrified world, "with all my imperfections on my head."

"The man for you," said my friend Ned Heseltine, one night as we perused the MS. for about the twentieth time, "is the compassionate inhabitant of Minerva Lodge, Mr. Junius Tallboys; he is rich, influential, affects literature, and likes to patronise young authors—what could be

better? Write him a note, ask him if you may exhibit your MS., get his name on the title-page, and then appear in the shop windows, to rival Shakspeare and eclipse Pope."

The advice was good, and I acted upon it forthwith, receiving in a day or two a polite invitation to spend a few hours at Minerva Lodge, when, if I would kindly take the MS., Mr. Junius Tallboys would have the pleasure of perusing it.

The residence of my kind friend is situated about four miles to the south-east of Maltby, being one of a little group of villas, which, with a few cottages, a beer-house, and a post-office, form the pretty little village of Upton, celebrated for the salubrious climate it enjoys, and for being the scene of my singular adventure.

Accordingly at the appointed time I grasped the precious foolscap in my hand, and deposited myself in the railway carriage which was to whirl me to the nearest station to Upton, an omnibus attending there for the convenience of those who wished to proceed thither, the distance being about a mile and a half.

I stepped out of the train with all the glee and confidence of youth, and finding that the omnibus did not proceed immediately, I sauntered into the waiting-room of the railway station with the intention of giving a last look at my composition, and of selecting a piece or two of the most elegant to submit to Mr. Tallboys' criticism first. However, on entering the room, I found it was occupied by a gentlemanly-looking man of about thirty years of age, dressed with great taste in black, and wearing a white hat, which he removed with a courteous salutation as I advanced, displaying a noble forehead and a profusion of black hair; there was, however, a twinkle about his deep-set eyes that struck me as being remarkable, coupled as it was with a restless, impatient glance, and an eccentricity of manner which displayed itself in every action.

"Good morning, sir," said my new acquaintance; "will you permit me to offer you the *Times?*"

"Thank you, sir, I have already perused it. Nothing fresh this morning, I think?"

"Rather a good review that of the new geological and astronomical work. But perhaps the subject does not interest you?"

I replied, that the knowledge I possessed of the two sciences was so slight as not to warrant my offering an opinion on any particular theory, but that I felt much interest in hearing the different systems explained.

"Well," said he, "I have studied the subject for years, and have come to the conclusion that the theory of progressive development is the only true one. We have been monads, we are men, and shall be angels; we progress alike in mental and physical construction every day. Don't you think so—eh?" And his eyes flashed fire as he jerked his head over his shoulder and glared at me impatiently.

"I hope, for the credit of humanity," I replied, "that the human race is every day advancing in civilisation and every good quality, yet I cannot see the justice of the philosophy of Laplace and the French school, who teach that man is only a sublimated monkey. I would have such men speak only for themselves. If they are conscious of possessing the qualities of an ape, by all means let them go to the Regent's Gardens and choose their grandfathers; but it is past a joke for them to insist on my being a relative of the same unpleasant animal."

"Well, now," said he of the white hat, "I should have thought you knew better; but perhaps we shall have an opportunity of discussing the matter further. Do you reside here?"

"No; I am but a visitor for the day."

"Thought I knew your face. Are you not Mr. Tennyson, the poet-laureate?"

I laughed at the mistake, and replied that I had not obtained that distinction.

"Then you are on a visit here?"

"Yes; to Mr. Junius Tallboys, of Minerva Lodge," said I, rather annoyed at the cross-questioning.

"Oh—ah—yes! Good day, Mr. Tennyson."

And the eccentric believer in the development theory walked out; and, unfolding my manuscript, I was soon lost to the world and its cares, being recalled to earth by the crack of the coachman's whip, as he shouted—"Anybody more a-goin' on?"

"Confound it, it's *too* bad—much too bad! Why, that fellow has taken my new eighteen-shilling silk hat, and left me this abominable white one. —Hi! coachman! do you see anything of a gentleman with a black hat on?"

A roar of laughter from the passengers was the only reply; and becoming sensible of the absurdity of my inquiry, I stuck the *chapeau* on the top of my skull (for it was much too small) and climbed up the side of the omnibus, taking my seat on that engine of torture for long-legged men—the knife-board.

Away we went, leaving a chaise in the distance which was evidently dashing along the road at almost railway speed, rolling by whitewashed cottages, with roses and woodbines creeping along the walls, filling the air with fragrance, and recalling the scenes and friendships of earlier, and perhaps happier days, when life was still untried, and hope had still a foot upraised—away past the horseman who is galloping madly down the hill, and who nods to the driver as he whirls along, pulling up at last at a road-side inn, for the accommodation of one of the passengers inside.

Hardly had we had time to look around us ere the horseman we had met galloped up, and accosted the driver with, "Here, Dick, a word with you."

The man descended from the box, and approached the new comer. Part of their conversation was easily overheard, the substance being as follows:

"Then you met the chaise?"

"Of course I did; but the bird had flown."

"It is odd that he should take this road. Are you quite sure you are right?"

"Certainly I am, Dick; you know he couldn't tell where he was going; and the description tallies exactly—'tall, pale, and thin, black suit and cravat;'—besides, look at the hat!"

"Oh—ay, to be sure, that settles the matter at once; but what do you mean to do?"

"You must drive round by——"

Here I was unable to hear more, not that I felt at all curious (for I

was thinking of Mr. Tallboys and the probable result of my visit), and what I had heard left no impression on my mind, being merely the result of a mechanical operation on my part, and not of any effort to overhear the conversation.

"Are you going through, sir?" inquired Jehu, as he mounted once more.

"I really cannot say," I replied. "I wish to be put down at Minerva Lodge, wherever that may be."

"All right, sir. Come up hoss! Boxer! Punch! Come up then! —woha! woha! Here you are, sir, Minerva Lodge. Sixpence, sir; thankee. Come up hoss! Boxer! Punch!" And away went the omnibus.

Minerva Lodge, as it stood before me, was a neat brick edifice, with nothing very remarkable in its appearance. Everything looked prim and orderly; the windows were well cleaned, the garden in front was well stocked and well kept; and even the peacock, who strutted about in the sunshine, seemed to be the most orderly and amiable of birds.

"Morning, sir," said a voice behind me; and on looking round I beheld the man who had spoken with the driver of the omnibus at the road-side inn.

"Good morning," I replied, rather coolly (for I considered his salutation rather impertinent). "Can you inform me whether this is Minerva Lodge?"

"All right, sir," said he. "Allow me to open the gate if you please, it will save you the trouble of ringing the bell; for, as I live here, I have the key. There, sir, if you will go to the door, I'll tell the servant to let you in."

"If you please," said I; "and take care you let Mr. Tallboys know I am here, as he expected me."

"Oh, yes! I know he did," responded the man, as he rode round the house and disappeared.

"Well," I thought, "my patron keeps rather familiar domestics; but perhaps the fellow is a sort of steward, and so gives himself airs."

"Will you walk in, sir?" said a footman, opening the door; "master desires me to say that he will be down immediately."

I followed "Jeames" into a handsome apartment, where I had not remained two minutes before my host appeared.

He was a short, stout, rosy-faced gentleman, about fifty years of age, dressed in black, with a white cravat; his bald head fringed with silver hair contrasted admirably with his florid complexion; and by the easy, satisfied air with which he played with the massive seals depending from his watch-chain, you might have rightly set him down as a man who was independent of the world, and who would not submit to be patronised even by a king.

"Well, Mr. Lester, I am glad to see you at last—I've been expecting you some time."

I bowed my acknowledgments, but reminded him that my name was Blewitt and not Lester, and that, with his permission, I would proceed to show him the poems I had written, and hoped that he would allow me to dedicate them to him.

"Oh, your name is Blewitt," cried my patron. "Ah, yes, I see, I had

forgotten the circumstance, but you must excuse me; and these are your poems, and very nice little pieces they are too. Ah, yes, to be sure—'Lines to Mary'—very pretty indeed—beautiful, beautiful! Why, my dear sir, you are quite a genius."

"Then you will permit me to make use of your name," said I, feeling rather annoyed at the cool reception I had received.

"Oh, yes, certainly, to be sure you may; anything you like, my dear sir. I am delighted to find that you have discarded geology and astronomy."

"Really, sir," I exclaimed, "I am not aware that I have given any undue preference to the sciences you name; you are probably thinking of the Mr. Lester you took me for at first."

"Oh—ah—yes—hum—to be sure, you are right; it is very stupid of me, but perhaps you will let me feel your pulse?"

"Feel my pulse, sir!"

"Oh, it is only a little whim of mine. Whenever a gentleman calls upon me I always like to feel his pulse, so you must humour my whim. Come now, do."

And he took my wrist between his fingers, and with his eye upon his watch counted the pulsations.

"Well," thought I, "had I known what a madman Mr. Junius Tallboys was, I'd have put the poetry in the fire before I would have been treated in this way; the man must be intoxicated with his nonsense about astronomy and geology. And, by-the-way, that is just the theme my friend at the railway station harped so much upon. Well, sir, is the pulse satisfactory?"

"Feverish, sir—feverish; but not so bad after all. You must not excite yourself, sir. Keep calm, and you will soon be well. Would you like a little luncheon?"

"Thank you, I had rather not trouble you. Now that the object of my journey is attained, you must permit me to take leave of you, with my best thanks for your kindness."

"Yes, yes—oh yes, to be sure; you shall go soon; but sit down. You are faint with fasting. There, let me take your hat—very nice hat this—and you do right to have your name written inside. I'll hang it up outside, and go and see after something to eat;" and my host vanished.

Hardly had he had time to get out of sight before I opened the door and reached down the hat from the peg in the hall, and in the inside appeared to my astonished eyes the name of Frederick Lester, written in large characters.

I was evidently in a wrong house, and was taken for the person I had seen at the railway station. I resolved to unravel the mystery at once, and approached the bell-rope in order to summon "Jeames." Good gracious! what is that I see? a drawing of this very house, and underneath it written "Dr. Gregory's Asylum!" I jerked the bell-rope with such fury as to bring it down with a crash.

"Tell your master I wish to see him instantly," said I to the servant who opened the door.

I paced to and fro across the floor, half-vexed, half-inclined to laugh at the ridiculous situation I was in, impatiently awaiting the return of my host, who soon made his appearance, and invited me into another room to take some refreshment.

"You might have ridden the whole way," he continued, "but you are so very self-willed, my dear friend, and you know you ought to take good advice. Ah, yes, to be sure."

"Stop, sir," I cried; "I find that I have intruded myself upon you under the impression that you were Mr. Tallboys, and this house, Minerva Lodge. I find, however, that this is a lunatic asylum, and that you are a physician taking me for an expected patient, who was met by me at the station this morning, and who then exchanged hats with me, probably with the intent of escaping notice. Now, sir, my position—indeed I may say *our* position—is so very absurd, that you must at once permit me to say good morning."

"Ha, ha!—oh yes, to be sure—excellent—good, very good—ah, yes, to be sure, you shall go directly; but come and get something to eat first—never travel on an empty stomach—very bad thing—very bad."

"Excuse me, Doctor Gregory," I replied, "but as my time is precious, I am sorry I cannot accept your kind invitation—good morning;" and I attempted to pass out.

"Jones! Smith!" shouted the doctor as I crossed the threshold of the room; and the next moment I beheld my path obstructed by two keepers, one of them being the identical man who had spoken to the driver of the omnibus on our way from the station.

"Now come, sir," said the man, in soothing tones, "don't you be aggrawatin'; you know you're very ill, and mus'n't go out by no manner of means."

"Doctor Gregory," I almost screamed, "is it your intention to keep me here a prisoner?—if so, I will remind you that the law is on my side, and I shall not fail to make you feel it."

"Now, my dear young friend, do not excite yourself—now, pray do not, or I must really have your hair cut off, to keep your head cool, and that *would* be a pity; oh! ah! yes—wouldn't it now?"

Just at that moment the hall-door was opened by some person, who held it by the handle for an instant, the two keepers at the same time turning their heads by a very natural impulse.

"Now or never," thought I; and quick as lightning I dashed between them, overthrowing them both by the suddenness of the shock, and, darting to the door, was confronted by a tall, pale young man in spectacles.

"Stop him, Jackson," yelled the doctor from the top of the stairs; but ere the command could be obeyed, the rim of his hat came into violent collision with the tip of his nose, from the judicious application of my hand to the crown thereof, and pushing him aside, I set off at top speed, hotly pursued by the keepers.

I cleared the gate with a bound, and, never hesitating about the road I should take, ran across the highway, and jumping another gate, struck into what appeared to be a by-path to some adjacent village. Here I ran less risk of being stopped by passengers on the road, and felt confident of giving my pursuers the slip by my dexterity in jumping ditches and vaulting over gates.

In this hope I was miserably disappointed, for, on turning a corner which was thickly planted with trees, I beheld, to my utter discomfiture, two persons chasing a third, who was coming towards me with great rapidity.

"Stop him!" shouted the keepers.

"Stop him!" echoed the others.

The individual who was being pursued was now within a hundred yards of me, and a single glance showed him to be the eccentric purloiner of my hat.

"Hillo! hillo!" he screamed, rushing at me, and seizing me by the throat—"here he is, my lords, ladies, and gentlemen—here he is: this is the man who killed the Emperor of Calcutta!"

"Let me go, villain," I cried, struggling to escape—"let me go, you rascal!"

"It's the poet-laureate!" he exclaimed, giving a wild leap into the air; "let him die the death of a minute periwinkle." And in another second I was hurled to the ground, and his knee was forcibly pressing on my chest.

In a few moments he would have made an end of me, and the public would have suffered an irreparable loss, had not the four pursuers come up and extricated me from my very uncomfortable and dangerous position.

"Well, then, you see you're caught at last," said one of the keepers.

"Yes," I replied; "and dearly shall you pay for to-day's work."

"One of your patients, I suppose?" observed one of the persons who was holding my scientific friend.

The speaker was a mild, gentlemanly man of about forty-five years of age, dressed plainly, yet with elegance, and whose whole appearance denoted one used to good society.

"Yes, sir," returned the keeper, "he only came to-day, and I think he must be first cousin to the young gentleman you have there."

"Ha, then," puffed out Dr. Gregory, as he trotted round the corner with all the speed he was capable of—"ha, then, here he is. Now, my dear young friend, how could you do so?—ah! yes, hum. Why, Mr. Tallboys, is that you?"

"Tallboys!" I exclaimed—"is your name Tallboys, sir?"

"It is, sir; and what then?"

"Only that my name is Blewitt, that is all. I was coming to see you on business, the nature of which you are acquainted with. The driver of the omnibus, and this ruffian here, directed me to this man's lunatic asylum, from whence I managed to escape, and was pursued and captured as you have seen."

"Here is some ridiculous mistake here, Gregory," said Mr. Tallboys. "This young man (pointing to the owner of the white hat) has been to my house, and represented himself to be Mr. Blewitt; and as I was not personally acquainted with that gentleman, of course I believed him; but his behaviour was so eccentric that I was compelled to ring for my valet here to assist me in securing him. However, he managed to overpower us both, and jumping out of the window, set off at full speed, and we have only just succeeded in capturing him."

"Hip, hip, hurrah!" roared the madman. "Hurrah for the Royal Cockatoo of the Isles of Greece!—and hurrah for burning Sappho!" he added, after a pause, at the same time administering a well aimed blow on the valet's nose, which nearly caused him to loose his hold.

"Well, ah, yes," remarked Dr. Gregory, "our friend there does certainly look a little out of order, but then this young gentleman here has

his identity established by the fact of his name being written in his hat. How is that to be accounted for?"

"Look at that madman's hat," I cried; "he exchanged it for mine at the railway station. It is manufactured by Wilson and Smith, has a black ink stain on the white lining—done last night—and a gilt rim round the inside of the crown, which is intersected by two red stripes."

"Just as the gentleman describes it," said the valet (handing the hat to his master, who, after examining it, passed it to the doctor).

"Furthermore," I continued, "here is my card-case, containing cards with the name of Blewitt thereon; and lastly (tearing off my collar), my linen bears the same mark."

"Let him go," said the doctor to the keepers, who instantly released me. "This is a very unfortunate blunder—yes, ah, hum, to be sure. Now go and secure Mr. Lester, and bring him along very gently."

The men obeyed, and the doctor was about to raise his hat in adieu, when I laid my hand upon his shoulder.

"Stop, sir!" I exclaimed, boiling with rage; "you shall give me satisfaction for this morning's work; and if Mr. Tallboys will act as my friend, we will settle this affair before we part."

"And Mr. Tallboys *will* act as your friend," said that gentleman, coming forward, "by advising you to shake hands, and forget this absurd adventure. Doctor Gregory will, I am sure, apologise for his share in it, and you must acknowledge that there was some excuse for his conduct."

"He's a poet," roared the maniac.

The absurdity of the remark, coming as it did quite in unison with my friend's sentiment, made us all laugh so heartily, that any animosity on my part was at once extinguished. Men can never quarrel when they have just laughed together.

"Sir," exclaimed the doctor, offering his hand, "I apologise sincerely. At first I thought that you did not quite answer the description of the patient I expected to see. But, sir, when you—when you—ah—hum—yes——I had rather not finish my remark."

"Oh, finish it by all means."

"Well then, sir, when you—ha! ha!—when you produced the poetry—ha! ha!—I felt sure that—he! he!—why, that—that——"

"That he *must* be mad," suggested Mr. Tallboys.

"Just so," returned the doctor.

Mr. Lester, after dancing several unknown dances, and making sundry zoological noises, was at last handcuffed and led away, giving me an opportunity of inquiring by what strange combination of circumstances I had thus stood in his shoes, and under his hat.

The following was the gist of the explanation.

Frederick Lester was a young man of property, residing at a village some thirty miles distant. Being an orphan, and born of poor parents, a distant relative, who was a rich old bachelor, adopted him; and, at his death, left him all his wealth.

Frederick Lester, who had taken high honours at Oxford, then devoted himself entirely to the study of geology and astronomy; and to such an extent did he pursue his labours, that his health gradually gave way, until at last Reason tottered on her throne, and he was reduced to the pitiable condition in which we had seen him.

The village surgeon having vainly attempted to effect a cure, resolved upon having him placed under the skilful care of Dr. Gregory, and accordingly, after some correspondence between the two, it was arranged that the patient should be conveyed in his own carriage, as being the most private mode, and that his effects should be sent by railway; therefore, on the arrival of the same, with a note from the surgeon stating that Lester would arrive on the morrow, accompanied by one of his own servants, and his (the surgeon's) assistant, Dr. Gregory ordered his head keeper to meet them on horseback and act as guide, which order the man executed the next morning.

In the mean time the lunatic had escaped during the journey at a village where they had stopped to change horses, and as it afterwards appeared, had gone to the railway, and, by a strange coincidence, had proceeded to the very place where he was being conveyed. It was here where I encountered him, and where, with a madman's cunning, he had exchanged hats with me, knowing that his own was likely to distinguish him, and be the means of his capture.

On finding that Mr. Lester had given them the slip, his servant and the surgeon's assistant had posted with all speed to Upton, in order to acquaint Dr. Gregory with the occurrence, that steps might be taken to find the runaway, and it was this carriage I had observed on starting in the omnibus from the station.

The keeper had also passed us on the road, and was the same horseman who was galloping down the hill before mentioned.

According to this man's account, he met the carriage driving at a furious rate, and, from the description of the vehicle given to him by his master, stopped the driver, and inquired if they had brought Mr. Lester, as he had been sent to show them the road.

"He has managed to give us the slip," said the incipient surgeon, "and a fine lecture I shall get, if he is not found pretty soon. However, it's a comfort to know that his white hat will soon betray him.

"What, has he a white hat?"

"Yes. Have you seen him?"

"Black suit, white hat?"

"The same: where is he?"

"Met him on the 'bus just now. It's all right, you may depend upon it. You had better return, as he may become bad to manage if he sees you, and I can soon overtake the 'bus and make everything safe."

Glad to be relieved of the responsibility, the worthy pair retraced their steps, leaving me to bear the consequences of their want of caution.

The keeper communicated with the driver of the omnibus, as has already been shown, and the result was, that, without being fully qualified for the situation (although I *was* a poet), I was installed as a candidate for sanity at Dr. Gregory's college.

"Well, come," said Mr. Tallboys, "now that everything has been explained, let us go and dine. Come, doctor, your patient can do without you for an hour or two."

"I am anxious," said I, as our hospitable host took an arm of each, "to know how you came to believe that yon unfortunate man was the person you expected to see."

"I was in my study," he replied, "and of course waiting for your

advent, when my valet announced that a gentleman wished to see me. Being convinced that it must be you, I proceeded to the drawing-room, where I found the poor fellow we have just quitted.

"'Mr. Blewitt, I believe?' said I.

"He bowed and handed me a chair.

"'I shall be glad, sir,' I resumed, 'to see your poetry, which, if report says truly, is well worth perusing.'

"'Thank you,' he replied; 'I will make a point of showing you some one of these days.'

"I felt indignant at the coolness of the reply, but made no remark, merely offering him a glass of wine, of which a supply had been placed on the table.

"'Bring a tumbler,' said he to the servant, 'and, hi! Doctor Johnson, as you value your reputation, bring a large one.'

"'My servant's name is not Johnson,' I observed, with some warmth, 'neither is he a doctor; and in this house we generally use tumblers for other purposes than to drink wine out of.'

"'Ah,' said he, 'some persons do. Now then, Sir Isaac Newton, I'll drink a bumper to that silly theory of yours—gravitation.' And suiting the action to the word, he filled the tumbler with my fine old port (which is as strong as brandy), and drank it off.

"'Sir,' I exclaimed, 'you will excuse my plainness——'

"'Don't mention it, Newton,' he broke in; 'you *are* very ugly; but never mind, old boy, I won't reproach you with it; you'd be a good-looking fellow if you could, no doubt.' And his eyes glowed like two live coals under the influence of the wine.

"'You are not in a fit state for a gentleman to converse with,' I exclaimed, 'therefore my servant shall show you the door.'

"Further speech on my part was interrupted by Mr. Lester violently overturning the table and seizing me by the nape of the neck, at the same time exclaiming: 'I'll teach you, sir, to humbug me with gravitation; I'll see whether you carry out your own doctrine. Hurrah! here's fun, to throw a philosopher out of the window!'

"Dragging me to the window, he opened it with one hand, and would certainly have hurled me out, had not my valet, attracted by the noise, rushed in and prevented him. Then, quitting his hold, he yelled out: 'There's that horrid Doctor Johnson wanting to read the "Rambler" and kill us all; here, doctor! give that to Goldy.' And he dealt a severe blow on the man's head, and sprang through the open window.

"Enraged beyond all expression, we rushed after him, and with what success you already know. Suffice it to say that the exertion has given me the best of appetites, and as we are now at Minerva Lodge, permit me to give you a hearty welcome."

In conclusion, permit me to say that, after a convivial evening, we parted in the very best of humours; that my poems appeared in due time, dedicated to Mr. Junius Tallboys, which procured for them the honour of a sale of twenty-five copies; and finally, that I bade farewell to the Muses, and doubt not but that the readers of this narrative will pronounce me to be by this time sufficiently *prosy*.

THE TWO PICTURES.

BY MARY C. F. MONCK.

THE autumn sun hung redly in a sky
Heaped with huge piles of dark and lurid clouds,
And cast a faint light through the oriel panes,
Where the thick dust of years lay undisturbed.

The wind howled, raving, round the ancient walls,
And tore the clinging ivy-leaves that hung
O'er ruin and decay, striving in vain
To hide the desolation time had wrought.

But stormy clouds, or shrieking blasts, or rain,
I thought not of.—
Within the gallery
Hung many a pictured face—old warrior knights,
With sword in hand, looked sternly down on me,—
Hard-knitted brows, and fierce, unpitying eyes.
I sickened as I gazed, and thought, perforce,
Of battle-fields heaped with the young and brave,
Of shattered walls blackened by fire and smoke,
And cities filled with rapine and with blood;
I felt that those strong arms had fleshed their blades—
Stricken, and spared not, in the hour of strife—
That ear and heart alike were deaf and closed
To the wild cry for mercy.—
—Next to these
Were smiling courtiers, with lace-ruffled hands,
And floating locks in long and silken coils—
Then, thoughtful-eyed and grave, with furrowed cheeks,
Came pale, ambitious statesmen—prelates old—
And stately ladies, starched and stomachered—
And coy, young, blooming girls, with pouting lips,
And large voluptuous eyes of lambent fire.—
It made me sad to think those lifeless things
Were all now left of those whose swords, and prayers,
And counsels, and sweet smiles, once had their parts
In generations long resolved to dust—
Who lived and fought, and spoke, and loved, and smiled,
And wept, and suffered, and went down to rest
In the still sleep and quiet of the grave.
But, further on,—
—Curtained and placed in shadow, side by side,
Were two old darkened paintings; and I stood
Before them, chained in look and thought, till night
Stole slowly up the angry western sky,
And cast her veil of darkness o'er the world.

One was a summer landscape.—
—Heavy trees,
Dark with rich foliage, swept the smooth greensward,
Where herds of dappled deer and graceful fawns
In the long vistas laid them down to rest.
The hues of sunset glowed upon a lake
Dotted with fairy islands, where, through glooms
Of trees and shrubs and tall wild water-plants,

Gleamed still white statues, draped with flowers and leaves,
Naiads and Fauns, and sylvan gods and nymphs,
Creatures of the old world's mythology,
Placid and beautiful, or wild and arch,
With the grotesque embodiment that clothed
Those children of the poets and the priests.

An old stone terrace hung above the lake;
Quaint heads of strange device, and antique urns
Filled with bright foreign flowers of flame and gold,
And softest amethyst, and purest snow,
O'ertopped stone balustrades whose massy bulk
Was wreathed with sprays and tendrils of the vine,
And broad rich leaves, and clustering purple grapes,
That hung in heavy garlands all unpruned.

And on that terrace, in the summer glow
Of sun, and leaf, and blossom—beautiful
As aught the heart can dream of loveliness
In forms of human mould—stood, hand-in-hand,
Two young and happy creatures, from whose eyes
The light of love, free, joyous, uncontrolled,
Beamed on each other.
Her brown tresses streamed,
Rich and luxuriant, down her rounded cheek,
And over smooth white shoulders that shone through
The thick and closely-clinging sunny curls,
And vied in whiteness with the drapery
That fell around her lithe and pliant form.
You almost thought the lifeless canvas breathed;
And the round, swan-like throat, seemed yet to hold
Its up-raised attitude of fond regard,
Instinct with warmth and life.—
—It needed not
That words should tell me that the dark-haired youth,
Who bent beside the glad and beauteous girl,
Was he who loved her and was loved by her.
I felt it as I gazed, and busy thought
Drew auguries from their bright happiness,
And all the wealth and beauty round them spread,
That theirs had been a rare and blissful fate—
Beloved and loving, with no cloud or storm
To break the sunny calm of happiness.

Alas! alas! such fate is not for man,
Cloud follows sunshine, storm succeedeth calm,
Upon the brightest path.
I cast mine eyes
Upon the other picture.
What was there—
A nun with sackcloth girt; her feet were bare,
And bled on rough dark flints, cruel and sharp;
But not so cruel or so sharp as grief—
And *that* was throned within the gentle breast.

Green damps were festering on the slimy walls;
Dim vaults and low-browed arches frowned and yawned
Around the fair and pallid penitent.
A faint, dull taper in her wasted hand,

Was all the light, and showed that saintly face
Ghastly and hopeless, and how sadly changed!
But 'twas the same: I knew the faded wreck
Of the young beauty at her lover's side.

The same—but wakeful nights and tortured days
Had done their worst, and left the mobile mouth
And soft round cheeks sunken and colourless;
The mournful eyes were patient, but my heart
Ached at the patience born of misery,
And cradled 'mid the ruins of the past.

She gazed into the gloom as though her eyes
Beheld it not, or only as the veil
That hung between them and the future world—
The only refuge now for the poor soul
Sickened of earth, and longing for the peace
That life had long denied.
O, love and earth!
The light from heaven warring for evermore
With the dull clay that dims and prisons it!

What knew I how the fairy palace built
By hope and bliss and youth had crumbled down!
What tongue could tell me now if love grew cold
And fled? and with him hope—and youth was left
Amid the wreck of his enchanted halls,
To pine awhile, then die? or, gathering strength
And calmness from defeat and loss, live on!
If it be life, to breathe and smile and speak,
And hold the while a grave within the heart,
Where still and uncomplaining sits despair,—
What knew I if the weary, mocking world,
And potent time and change, or fraud and force,
Had sundered those young lives?—enough to know
That they *were* sundered.
One, alone and frail,
Keeping her midnight vigil, while cold Death,
Her only wooer now, breathed on her lips,
And grasping her with one grim, icy hand,
Walked step by step in triumph at her side.
The other?—
Who shall say if yet he lived?
Or where? or how?
But one thing I can tell:
Those two old pictures rise before me now,
Vivid and life-like, and I see the pair
Rich in their love and beauty; and I see
The young nun walking on the bloody flints,
In fruitless penance for the wandering thoughts
That would flee back to the old happy time
Gone by for ever, like a summer day.

XIII.

THE ingenuity of Ives to accomplish the purpose last named was fairly put to the test. Sister Genevieve was as vigilant to detect and frustrate every attempt as the other party was quick to devise and execute. The failure of several stratagems at last caused the plotting falconer boldly to attempt one of much more than ordinary danger; consequently requiring a proportionately greater amount of skill—namely, in making the wary nun herself the strict medium to gain his ends. The idea itself was a stroke of daring genius. The result was as follows. It was a custom of the good sister, every evening, winter and summer, to take exercise in the convent garden before retiring to rest. Whether this was done for penance—which her rheumatic pains would make doubly severe—or from habit, or a prescribed regimen, it matters not; but she did it, and it so happened that one dark night as she was taking her usual round, she was saluted in deep sepulchral tones by the name of "Genevieve," and, looking up, she could faintly distinguish a figure dressed in white, standing against the wall. Though a little startled, her nature was too cold to betray (or perhaps even to feel) fear, and she replied, sharply:

"I am *sister* Genevieve. Who, in the name of all holy saints, art thou?"

"I was called Willibald in the flesh," answered the figure; "and in the flesh, Genevieve, was I known unto thee."

"Ah! art thou come to remind me of the past?" asked the nun with a troubled voice. "But say, how comes it? if thou art the shade of Willibald, how hast thou burst the chains which bind each ghost in purgatory till the midnight hour?"

"When follies like mine are unatoned for," replied the ghost, "and the partaker of them lives, it is permitted the departed one to return to earth and appear before the living."

"Exorciso te!" exclaimed the nun. "I have no longer part or parcel in this world's vanities. The evil of my former course I have long eschewed. Therefore depart and trouble me not."

"Thou canst not exorcise me," rejoined the spectre. "Thou must do atonement for my share of the sins done in the body."

"Be it so. I will pray devoutly for the good of thy soul."

"That will avail me not," replied the denizen of another world. "Aves and credoes require I none."

"How! what!" cried the astounded nun. "Be there heretics in the other world as well as this?"

"Ask no vain questions," responded the ghost, feeling, probably, the impropriety of entering upon questions of theology—"ask no vain questions, but if thou wouldst benefit my soul heed my words. There lives at hand a youth named Sweene, and a maid hight Githa, who have formed an honourable love, but whom thou dost prevent with a most watchful eye from intercourse one with the other. This is not right. Thou art old, Genevieve, and fit only for the mews; but forget not the young bird can mount still."

"Old! and fit for the mews!" said the recluse, repeating the offensive words.

"Ay," continued the spirit; "thy soaring days are past. Let this young pair, then, have freedom of discourse, or know," it added solemnly —"know that Willibald can have no rest, neither can he permit thee any."

To this appeal sister Genevieve made no response, which caused him of the white shroud to continue:

"Thou art silent. Take my words to heart and do as I wish thee. Yet now I bethink me, there is another thing which if thou doest will add much to my peace of body—I mean mind. Thou art acquainted, doubtless, with one Ives, a falconer?"

"Yes, forsooth!" assented the nun, heartily; "as one busy in idleness; ready in plots and mischief as he is slow to goodness and grace; a hatcher of foolish things; troubled with a crazy brain, which is ever leading him to be laughed at even by those whom he would dupe. Yes—yes, I know him."

"Guh! guh!" grunted the spectre in a still deeper tone than he had before used, "thou wrongest him—grievously dost thou wrong him. He is an honest fellow, and a clever, though I say it, who—hum! hum! Let me speak to thee, Genevieve, in his behalf."

"Name thy wish."

"Regard him, then, with a lenient eye and a compassionate spirit. Propitiate the cook of the nunnery that when called thither by his duties she may comfort the honest fellow with the most humming ale instead of the small beer; and reward his toils not merely with the plain cold beef—though in itself no bad solace to a pinched belly—but season it with a piece of some savoury haunch, or, lacking that, some trifling slice of the delicious boar's head."

Here the jaws of the white figure gaped fearfully, and closed with a loud smack.

"Thy discourse savors more, methinks, of this life than the next. But, man or spirit, I will know more of thee."

The nun then darted forward, at which movement the spectre began to make a precipitate retreat; but it was too late, for, grasping at the supposed shadow, she tore away the covering which enveloped the upper part, and displayed the burly features of Ives the falconer.

"I am abused," she then cried—"grossly abused. But thou shalt pay for it. Help! help!"

"Softly! softly! sister Genevieve; you will raise the whole place," whispered the now alarmed mimic.

"And so I will," returned the sister, still grasping the sheet; "help, I say! help!"

"Once more, softly, I pray ye," said Ives. "Let this matter be hushed up. For Willibald's sake, if not for mine, let me begone, and I am mum on the subject you wot of."

The recluse, from the height of her excitement, grew calmer at the hint thus put forth, and quitted hold of her captive, addressing him with:

"Thou art an insolent ruffian, and deservest much chastisement. But begone, and dare not to repeat a freak like this."

She then turned away and disappeared, while the *ci-devant* ghost

began to ascend the garden wall in a most unspiritual manner, namely, by a ladder framed of matted straw; this (having reached the top) he drew after him, and, throwing it on the other side, prepared to descend; when, owing probably to his trepidation, his foot slipped and he fell forward. He reached not the ground, however, for the flowing garments with which he had been enacting his assumed character got entangled with some projection behind, and held him suspended midway in the air. After several ineffectual struggles to free himself, he at last repeated the name of "Sweene" in a low voice, as though not wishing to be overheard by any one save the party named, but the summons not being attended to, and as his clothes tightening with his weight began to make his situation more critical, he bellowed out more lustily:

"Sweene, Sweene! where in the fiend's name art thou? Nay—sput—I shall be choked with these same cursed sheets anon. What! Sweene, I say—if ever I put myself again—Sweene! come, I prithee, and quickly—be a good fellow, and help me at need. Sweene!—be hanged to ye for a knave and a rascal, an ye desert a friend thus! Come, I know thou art but joking. What! lad, I see thee in the dark. Nay, then, an thou comest not, may Zernebock, Sathanas, or by whatever the foul fiend be called——Sput—sput!—deliver me from this bondage, good Sweene, and thou shalt have my blessing."

Here a smothered laugh broke in upon this strange mixture of pleading and curses, while a voice exclaimed, "Here I am;" and Sweene himself advanced towards the helpless supplicator. "How hast thou sped?" he asked.

"Sped! even as thou seest," answered the late spectre. "Help me down, for 'tis no laughing matter."

"Why, man," rejoined Sweene, "thou lookest like a great owl which hath overfed itself; or I could fancy thee come forth in thy sleep with a mind to try whether thou couldst not take a flight i' the air like one of thine own hawks."

"Plague on thy parodies," panted the unlucky ghost. "Unloose me an thou hast any bowels of compassion."

"That I will essay," replied the young man, "though thou lookest so light and airy that one might take thee for a ghost indeed; while thy staring eyes are horrible to look at, and might daunt any man."

To effect the prisoner's release was an easy task for Sweene's herculean strength; accordingly, grasping Ives on either hip, he freed him at once, and placed him safely on the ground.

"This is the just reward of playing the fool," remarked the disfranchised spectre, shaking himself. "Ives, Ives, will thy wild oats never be sown? Sweene, a murrain on it! thou hast drawn me into a sad scrape."

"I! not a jot. Thou wert the deviser of the whole scheme. What can have brought thee to repent of it so quickly, for as we came along thou wert boasting of it as the choicest brat thy brain ever gave birth to?"

"That sister Genevieve is as cunning as a she fox," remarked the falconer; "believe me, Sweene, I played the ghost capitally, stretched forth my hand according to the set rule, and spoke i' the low bass 'till my throat is as rough as a cock's-comb, yet did she find me out, and fastened upon me as a ground-hawk would a hare."

"Art thou sure, Ives," asked Sweene, "thou didst not let slip some of thy hawking terms, which led the sister to suspect thy ghostship?"

"Am I a fool?" was the indignant retort. "It may be that a word or so of the kind blurted forth, for 'tis no easy thing to hide one's vocation altogether. As to the rest, I uttered nought but what the most respectable of ghosts might have done. And yet, now I bethink me, it must have been the allusion to the venison haunch and the boar's head which undid me."

"The venison haunch!" echoed Sweene; "surely, man, thou didst not talk of eating? Spirits think not of such trifles."

"Nay, in my capacity of ghost, I spoke on behalf of one in the flesh—honest Ives, the falconer; but I now doubt me whether it was prudent so to do."

"It was great folly," answered Sweene, "and I could have played the part better myself."

"Thou, forsooth!" retorted Ives, with sovereign contempt—"thou enact the part of ghost! a part requiring a fine subtlety of conception, and an airy nothingness, as it were, of tone. Oh, the conceit and self-sufficiency of some men! Thou art, doubtless, good at broadsword exercise, and hast strength to fell an ox with thy bare fist, but as to playing the ghost—tut, tut!"

"Yet thou must own, good friend," replied Sweene, "that even I could not have made a much worse affair of it than thou hast done."

"Well, well, no more about it," rejoined the falconer. "Let us be jogging somewhat more briskly, for these sheets are thin, and the air's keen; besides that, this night-watching hath assured me of a stomach such as no ghost ever was blessed with."

XIV.

ALTHOUGH it does not form any part of the present narrative to enter into the more strictly historical events which took place in Britain during the winter months following the battle of Hastings, still, as the current of minor things is influenced by the mightier force of greater ones, the progress of the Norman Conqueror's career necessarily told upon the position of the characters here introduced and the incidents described. It must be stated then, that, according to authentic records, William being reinforced, after marching to London, was crowned there, in Westminster Abbey, having brought into subjection some of the adjacent counties. He then returned to his native Normandy, taking with him some of the more powerful Saxon chiefs whose necks had bowed to the yoke he had imposed on them. During the while he should be absent, the conduct of his affairs was committed to the hands of his half-brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, and his seneschal Fitzosborn—two men whose unscrupulous rapacity and reckless dispositions left to their own free will to cry "Havoc," made his selection of them to act as regents in the critical situation he was in almost incomprehensible to after commentators. That he had a special scheme of policy in such a selection, none who have studied his wily and speculative character can doubt. The fact and its results remain; the *problem* of his intent, however, is still unsolved.

Ediva accompanied the lady superior on her second visitation to the chamber of the wounded Wilstan. She gazed with compassion on him, stretched inanimate and exhausted; but as she spoke gently to the abbess, at the sound of her voice he opened his eyes wonderingly on the lovely vision before him. He tried to address her, but the words were inarticulate and confused, and the elder lady put her finger on his lips to enjoin silence; then, after prescribing for him, both left the apartment. On each succeeding day the invalid looked anxiously for the return of one who had aroused in him a new and pleasing emotion; and a glad smile or a heavy sigh betokened the interest he felt as his expectation was gratified or disappointed.

An admiration so unreservedly manifested could not long remain unnoticed, and the young girl, with maiden modesty, shrunk before it, and her attendances to Ives' dwelling grew less frequent. But what were Wilstan's speculations as he lay upon his couch? What his anticipations of the future whereupon hovered the image of Ediva? Castles in the air—day-dreams—or by whatever name those delicious reveries are called, which, gossamer-like, float high above the stern realities of life, how dear are ye to youth! And these said day-dreams appeared to work their spell on the newly-recovered boy, as week after week found him still employed, either with the sports of the field, or lingering in the precincts of Saint Winifred's nunnery. Many were the surmises occasioned by this lack of ardour to join the standard of his patriotic countrymen. The excellent abbess thus spoke of it to Ediva:

"Doubtless the youth, although so green in years, is weary of the turmoils of life. His soul, tender and compassionate, begins to sicken at the deeds of bloodshed it has witnessed, and viewing the peaceful serenity of our seclusion, would fain retire from the world, and seek its happiness within the quiet walls of a monastic order."

Ediva replied not; but an observer would have supposed, from the blush mantling on her cheek, that the maiden had her private interpretation on the matter. As to Sweene, a lover himself, he readily divined the truth, and, without revealing it, oft defended the lingerer's cause against the impatient mutterings of the veteran Guttorm, who could not understand the excuses made from time to time delaying their departure.

Affairs thus remained, when, one fine summer's morning, Wilstan was out in company with Ives, and listening to the falconer's praises of the hawk he held upon his wrist.

"Observe," said he, "the width of his nostril; never saw I, save one, with wider. Ay, 'twas a fine gyr-falcon, spitted one unlucky day by a spiteful hern. But look at his eye, Sir Thane—look at his eye! how cunning is it! Never tell me but he knows every word we say as well as you or I. For my part, I talk to him as to a Christian, and never feel the want of a companion when Bright-Eye is on my fist. And mark me, Sir Wilstan, 'tis the same tassel our own Harold took with him when he went that cursed journey to the court at Normandy. Count William cast a longing glance at the bird, and would doubtless have had it, but for a device of mine."

"How was it, Ives?" inquired Wilstan. "I hear that thy schemes usually recoil on thine own head. Did this so?"

"Humph! Sir Wilstan, heed not, I pray you, idle reports of that nature," said the falconer. "Hear for yourself, and judge. 'Fellow,' said the count to me, 'an thy master lays not too much stress on the keeping thy bird, fain would I purchase him.' But you must know, Sir Wilstan, I had taken note of the count's hankerings, and made my precautions. 'Noble sir,' said I, 'the bird flies well only in a southerly wind. It would break one's heart at times to see the peevish thing it is.' 'Be the wind as it may,' said he, 'let me see the bird fly to-morrow, and I will match it with one of mine.' I had nothing for it but to obey—left him, and went to consult with Bright-Eye, whom I thus spoke to: 'Poor creature! it goes to my heart to mar thy flight to-morrow; but an thou doest well this greedy Norman will lay claim to thee. Be not dispirited, therefore, though the Norman hawks get the day. Thou shalt soar the more freely when once again in merry England.' Then I thought to have plucked two *beams* from her *train*, and have them *imped* in when the danger had gone by; but I could not bring my mind so to maim her; and, instead, tied the principal feathers so that her *train* should not spread properly to the wind, thereby to impede her action. The thing answered, and Count William boasted that his hawks surpassed those of Llandudno. It grieved the noble Harold sore at the time, but afterwards he laughed right well when I told him of my cunning."

"He liked few things better than a good bird," remarked Wilstan, after expressing himself amused at the good falconer's ingenuity.

"Assuredly," assented Ives. "In that he showed sense and propriety. Now there be men who will vaunt foolishly of what pertains to their own vocation, and thereby regard things that be light and trivial as weighty and important. Men who, besotted in their own thinkings, would speak slightly even on the art of hawking and the training of birds. Let them go by. I would ask you, Sir Wilstan, if there is aught that bespeaks a man's parts or education so much as the light in which he regards the honourable calling to which I am a poor addition? But I know your answer," he added, ere the youth could speak. "It only grieves me that here the noble science is grown almost into disuse. My lady the abbess, though an excellent lady and a most kind mistress, hath not the taste befitting her high calling; and 'tis a rare thing for her to cast an eye towards a hawk. I assure you, Sir Wilstan, ere you came I was about to give up mine office in sheer despair and want of occupation; now, I could be well content to wear it an you would stay with us; but they tell me you must soon away to the wars, and no longer *jouk* at home; that you must be for unstriking steel bonnets instead of a bird's hood; and mounting the Norman ramparts instead of peering into the windows of St. Winifred's nunnery."

"Who are they that thus make free with my name, and canvass so boldly my actions?" exclaimed Wilstan, indignantly, though not without a feeling also of shame; but the inquiry remained unanswered, for here the attention of the loquacious falconer and himself were startled by a cry of terror, proceeding from the other side of a thicket which concealed alike the person it came from and the cause of it. Dashing through every obstacle, Wilstan the next moment stood before the Lady Ediva,

and to his horror beheld her struggling in the folds of a large black snake, while Githa was endeavouring to break off the branch of a tree, in order to come to the assistance of her mistress. He at once seized the reptile, which had begun to uncurl itself on his appearance, and, griping it by the neck, threw it, writhing with pain, into the brake. He then turned to reassure Ediva.

"Be in no terror," said he; "the creature is not venomous, and belongs to a species which alarms only the timid, and pursues those that fly from them."

"Neither very timid are we, nor disposed to fly," said Githa, advancing and flourishing the bough she had at last broken off. "Your coming, Sir Wilstan, has prevented a mortal fray."

"We have to thank you, Sir Wilstan, for your timely assistance," rejoined Ediva, who had now recovered her self-possession, "and I do not much regret the fright, since the occasion of it hath brought you hither, and enables me to speak with you without fear of causing a reproof from our excellent mother the lady abbess."

"To speak with me!" repeated Wilstan, joyfully.

"With you, Sir Wilstan," replied Ediva; "and if my words sound harsh and unpleasing, be sure they spring from no wish to give pain, but are uttered with a friend's sincere wish for your welfare. Let me first ask how comes it that Sir Wilstan, with recovered health, still lingers about this place, idle and purposeless?"

The maiden's voice slightly faltered, and she spoke with evident constraint; then, as Wilstan stood abashed, and did not speak, she continued:

"Know you not—have you not heard this question mooted—how that on every lip hangeth surmises, nay, even sneers; and that your name, fortunes, and even courage are everywhere discussed?"

"I care not," cried the youth. "If only the Lady Ediva contemns me not with *them*, I feel above the idle tongues of gossips. My name! they cannot tarnish it—and for my courage——"

"That was well proved at Senlac," said Ediva, taking up the sentence, as Wilstan hesitated to complete what appeared to his ingenuous mind a vaunting of his prowess. "But neither name nor courage is proof against calumny. Besides, your reputation is yet young;—'tis tender as the blossom which a breath may blight so that its fruit shall never ripen to its fulness. Away, oh Wilstan; join the heroes who stand armed and expectant for the coming struggle. This is no time to dream away and put off action. They, of true heart and of the ready hand, are at their post, and they shall triumph."

"I am ready—I will begone," said Wilstan. "Give me but the assurance that you think not meanly of me."

"I think not meanly of one towards whom I have undertaken that hard part of a friend's duty—to admonish."

"Oh, to know—to feel," cried the youth, passionately, "that whether in camp or field, amid dangers or fatigue, you felt a friendly interest, or cast a kindly thought on poor Wilstan! Oh, that I dare but in my wildest dreams aspire to such a hope! then would my arm be nerved and my soul strung worthy to deserve the grace so bestowed."

"Of this be sure, Sir Wilstan," said Ediva, coldly, "that you, and all who share this mighty enterprise, will have alike not only my most anxious thoughts, but earnest, constant prayers. Such are due to all."

"I did not deem myself higher in your regard than others are,—that were presumptuous. And yet, Ediva, you must know all, although I had resolved before to lock the secret in my bosom. Now, rather let me own my folly than be esteemed shrinking from danger, or lukewarm to the fortunes of my country. It is yourself—your image—which has chained me to this place, and neither sense of duty nor of honour had strength to cause me break my bonds. Oft have I made resolve to hasten to your noble father; but as oft have I sought new delays, unable to wrest myself from the circle drawn by your divine influence. Now, you know all."

Ediva stood troubled and confused at this sudden declaration of the youth's passion, and it was some time ere she could collect her thoughts to reply; when she did so, a slight tremulousness alone betrayed her emotion as she said with the same cold tone as before, "If that be so, 'tis due to both that I, the unwitting source of this defection from your duty, should repair, as best I may, the fault. Let me, then, urge your instant departure, and bid you forget a folly which has served but to do you the mischief of causing inertness in your country's service. Here is the convent gate. Farewell, Sir Wilstan, and may Heaven prosper you in the great work you are about to join."

Ediva then hasted forwards, only pausing a moment at the wicket door until joined by her handmaiden, who knowingly discreet had lingered behind, that her presence might not embarrass a conversation which she guessed to be one where a third party would be most superfluous. As she tripped past Wilstan she gave him a meaning smile and a look which might have been taken as by no means discouraging to his suit, especially as coming from one who was the sharer of his mistress's thoughts; but he was too much absorbed to notice it, as he stood watching the retreating figure of his lady-love with a trembling lip and a flushed cheek.

"Yes, I have indeed stayed here too long," he said to himself as the two maidens disappeared within the walls. "I have been deaf to all the hints given by my faithful friends—blind to all save her presence. And this is the result. She contemns me for what I have done. Mistakes my purpose. Slights the avowal I have made. Would I were dead. Yet no," added the poor youth with a gulp of resolution. "No. She is right to despise one who has done nought for her favour but to stay here in sloth and ease. Fool that I have been! I will amend all this, and the proud maid shall find that the same pathway her ancestors have trod to honour and to wealth is open even to me—to me, the friendless orphan! She shall not see me again,—not hear of me, until my name be sounded with the foremost, or my body left on the field a pawn for the attempt."

THE ROBBER'S WIFE.

A ROMANCE.

By William Roper.

I.

My thanks to you, brave sir, whose timely valour
And manly courtesy came to my rescue. *The Chances.*

In the early part of the seventeenth century there stood on the western verge of the Black Forest, in the territory of Baden, a small roadside hostel, of no very good repute, called the Black Eagle, which was kept by a portly individual of the name of Johann Lubeck; but being situated in a somewhat gloomy neighbourhood had a peculiarly desolate and uninviting appearance.

The evening on which our narrative commences was a cold and cheerless one in the latter end of autumn. A dark night was evidently about to succeed; loud gusts of wind howled through the long vistas of the forest and threatened every moment to topple down the chimneys of the inn. The signboard, bearing on each side of it a sort of hieroglyphic which some rustic artist had fondly imagined to be the resemblance of an eagle, creaked almost incessantly, and the landlord, deceived into the belief that it was the signal of a benighted traveller, had several times made his appearance in the doorway and cast an eager glance upon the landscape. At length, on the third or fourth occasion of his repeating this manœuvre, he received his reward in the shape of a solitary horseman, who was coming from the direction of Carlsrühe; and who, as he approached within speaking distance, hailed mine host by his familiar appellation of Johann. The landlord obsequiously ran forth to meet him and hold his stirrup while he dismounted, after which the stranger said, in a deep, mellow voice, "'Twill be a rough night, Johann, so look well to the steed! Throw down a fresh litter and give him a feed of oats. As for me, I too shall be glad of a good supper as soon as possible; but I have business in hand which will prevent me sleeping."

Saying which, he proceeded into the house, while the landlord led round the horse to some stables which stood at the back. The stranger made his way, as one familiar with the place, to the principal room in the inn, and having doffed his hat and cloak, seated himself by the side of a blazing fire, which cast a cheerful glow round the apartment. Ere many minutes had elapsed, Johann Lubeck made his appearance, followed by his daughter, a buxom damsel of seventeen, who carried on a tray a venison pasty of formidable dimensions and a flask of Rhenish wine. This tempting collation she placed upon the table, and having received a familiar nod of recognition from the stranger, disappeared. The landlord then, turning to his guest, exclaimed: "And now, Master Klieber, here is, so please you, as good a pasty as man ever sat down to, with liquor to match; and if you have no objection, I care not if I bear you company, for in sooth I know not how 'tis, but the sight of a pasty makes my stomach feel as hollow as an empty wine-cask." Whereupon, without more ado, mine host seated himself at the board, and tucking a

napkin under his chin, prepared to commence his gastronomic operations. The stranger, whom he had termed "Master Klieber," rose silently and seated himself also at the table. But it is time we describe that individual, who is to play a most prominent part in our narrative. In person he was not much above the middle height, but his robust and well-knit frame gave indications of a strength of no common order. His black hair, worn long as was then the custom, hung in ringlets round his shoulders; his complexion was dark and embrowned by exposure to the sun, his forehead was broad though not high, his eyes grey and piercing, his nose slightly aquiline, his lip shaded by a dark moustache, and over the whole countenance an air of stern thoughtfulness alternated with an expression of gay and reckless indifference. His years could not have exceeded twenty-eight. He wore a doublet and trunks of brown-coloured cloth, cloak of the same material, and riding-boots of untanned leather pulled high above the knee; and the broad-brimmed hat which he had thrown carelessly upon the floor was decorated with a single red feather. From his side depended a long rapier, and a brace of heavy horse-pistols were thrust into his belt.

Such in appearance was the individual who now joined mine host of the Black Eagle in his efforts to demolish the venison pasty and the flagon of old Rhenish; saying, as he did so:

"Now mine host, tell me, and as you value that bull-neck of yours, answer without prevarication, has Caspar von Hallé been here to-day?"

The landlord hesitated a moment, and then replied:

"Well—yes—if I must speak, he has."

"Humph!" muttered the other with an angry frown; "I thought as much. And what did he reveal to you?" he continued.

The landlord looked embarrassed.

"Reveal!" he repeated, with feigned astonishment; "I understand you not, Master Klieber."

"Knave!" exclaimed Klieber, "what devil's plot did Von Hallé unfold to you? Speak!"

There was something in his guest's countenance which warned mine host that trifling would be dangerous; and he said:

"Well, since it must out (though it is rather hard to be compelled to betray a friend's secrets), you must know that Von Hallé had obtained information of a certain nobleman, who is travelling from Oberkirch to Heidelberg, and would be likely to pass by here to-night—and so——"

"And so he has gone out to waylay him and take what he has about him, and is coming afterwards to the Black Eagle to make merry with the booty—eh, most upright Johann? 'Tis just as I suspected, and Von Hallé shall answer for his disobedience. I sent him out with his troop to look up a couple of recruits in place of poor Roland Steinfort and Otto Moritz, who fell in the last action with the Würtembergers, and finding he did not return after a four days' absence, and hearing nothing of him, I guessed that some villanous scheme was afoot, contrary to my express orders; and so I resolved to come in search of him. In conclusion, I tell thee what, Johann, if thou dost persist in encouraging my men to disobey me thus, I'll make a hole in that carcase of thine beyond the power of venison pasty or old Rhenish to heal!"

The landlord looked very crestfallen, but was protesting, with an oath,

that he meant no harm in what he did, when Kleiber cut him short by telling him to clear off the remains of the supper and leave him to his privacy.

Johann Lubeck obeyed; and his guest being left alone, advanced to the window, and endeavoured, though in vain, to look through the fast-increasing darkness. He then listened intently for some moments, and hearing nothing, threw himself carelessly and at full length on a bench which stood near the fire.

He had lain thus for the space of half an hour, his eyes closed, but not sleeping, when suddenly the silence was broken from without by the startling report of a pistol-shot, which appeared to proceed from the forest. In an instant Klieber was upon his feet, with his hand instinctively clutching the hilt of his sword; but before he could quit the room he was met in the doorway by Johann Lubeck, who exclaimed:

"They are about the business, captain! The sounds come from the Rastadt road, and I heard voices from that direction!"

"Arm yourself, then, and follow me!" returned Klieber, coolly cocking his pistols; "and if you possess the courage which I have sometimes heard you boast of, now is the time to show it." Saying which, he bounded from the room.

But alas! for the weakness of human nature! far from being moved by the spirit-stirring advice of his guest, mine host of the Black Eagle showed no kind of disposition to follow it, but merely muttered to himself:

"A likely piece of work, truly! A man of my age and bulk to thrust himself, neck and heels, into brawls of this description! A man of family, too!" And then, opening a cupboard in the wall, he took out a small flask of something which smelt like brandy, and attempted, by mild potations, to still the tremor of his limbs.

Meanwhile, Klieber had left the house and penetrated into the forest, when, having proceeded about two hundred yards, guided by another pistol-shot and a loud shout for help, he came out suddenly upon the high road, and there a scene of violence presented itself to his view. On the opposite side of the road was a travelling carriage overturned, one of the horses belonging to which lay dead in the traces; the other had broken loose and disappeared. At a short distance lay the postilion, weltering in blood; and, standing with his back to the carriage, was a young man of about three-and-twenty, richly dressed, who with two attendants, was defending himself desperately against the combined attack of half a dozen ruffians, armed to the teeth, who were furiously pressing upon him.

A single instant sufficed for Klieber to place himself by the side of the cavalier; a second, to bring one of the ruffians to the ground with a pistol-bullet in his shoulder. Another of the robbers, who seemed to be the leader, then turned upon him and attacked him sword in hand; but scarce had the weapons crossed when that of Klieber's opponent was sent flying over his head to a distance of several feet. At this instant the moon struggled from behind a thick veil of clouds, and cast a new light upon the faces of the combatants. The discomfited robber, who was in the act of levelling a pistol at Klieber, suddenly uttered a cry of mingled rage and astonishment, and turning, darted into the forest,

followed by the whole of his companions save him whom Klieber had brought down. Relieved from his danger, the young cavalier now turned to his deliverer and poured forth his thanks, saying:

"I owe my life to you, brave sir. Those villains would have quickly overpowered my defence had it not been for your most timely interference. I am Count Lindorf, of Ulm. May I know the name of my preserver?"

Klieber hesitated a moment, and then replied:

"Certainly, sir. I am a captain in the Austrian army, by name Rosenthal, and am travelling on leave of absence. I am happy in having been of service to you. But enough of compliments. Having put the enemy to flight, let us now look to the wounded."

So saying he turned to where the postilion was lying, but finding him to be quite dead, left him, and moved towards the wounded robber, who was just showing signs of returning consciousness.

"Are you hurt much?" inquired Klieber.

"My right arm is shattered," replied the robber, with a groan.

Klieber assisted him to rise, and Count Lindorf observed, beckoning his two attendants,

"Let my men take charge of him. He at least shall not escape justice!"

Klieber bowed, but said nothing. The servants placed themselves on each side of the wounded man.

"Now, my lord count," resumed Klieber, "there is at a couple of hundred yards from this spot, in the forest, an inn called the Black Eagle, to which if it please you we will direct our steps. There you will obtain rest and refreshment, and in the morning you can send forward to Carlsruhe for horses to prosecute your journey."

The count assented, and moved forward with Klieber. The two attendants walked behind with their prisoner, but had not proceeded far when they suddenly uttered an exclamation of alarm, and the count turning round, discovered that the robber had broken from them and disappeared in the forest. Reprimanding them sharply for their carelessness, he rejoined Klieber, and a minute or two afterwards the party arrived at the inn.

They were met at the door by Johann Lubeck, who came out bearing a torch; and Klieber, who was a little in advance of the others, accosted him in an under tone:

"So! mine host, thy valour is of a strange degenerate quality, and somewhat tardy withal!"

"Why, Master Klieb——"

"Rosenthal, knave!" whispered the other, interrupting him.

"Mum," replied the landlord, with a look of intelligence. And he ushered them into the apartment which has been already described as the principal one in the house.

"Now," said Klieber, "bring in a flagon of Rhenish, and the best of viands your house affords, for my lord the count; and take these good fellows into the kitchen and see they fare well, for they have deserved it."

The landlord hastened to obey. Klieber doffed his hat and cloak, and invited the count to do the same, saying:

"It will be impossible to resume your journey before daylight. What say you, shall we make a night of it?"

"I shall be but a sorry companion," returned the count; "I am scarce in the cue for merry-making."

"As you please," replied Klieber, carelessly. "I am a soldier, my lord count, and am pretty well used to adventure. Such little affairs as this of to-night seldom disturb my equanimity. But you are younger, and have seen less of the world perchance."

Though this was said with a good-humoured smile, and in a tone of perfect indifference, it evidently piqued the young nobleman; and he replied:

"Nay, you mistake, Master Rosenthal; my equanimity is not ruffled. Let us be merry, if it so please you, by all means."

The landlord returned at this moment with the remains of the pasty, an immense flagon of Rhine wine, and a couple of huge silver goblets, which he placed upon the table, and again disappeared.

"I have already supped, my lord count, before I came to your rescue," said Klieber, "and can bear witness to the excellence of that pasty. I will wait till you have satisfied your hunger, and will then assist you to do justice to the wine."

Accordingly he threw himself upon a bench until the count had supped; and then, filling the goblets, pledged the young nobleman in a bumper. In a short time the wine began to exercise a powerful influence over the young count, and, added to the excitement he had undergone in his conflict with the robbers, so elevated his spirits and loosened his tongue, that he soon became exceedingly communicative, and informed Klieber in a tone of confidence that he was bent upon a journey to the castle of Baron Falkenberg, situated between Heidelberg and Darmstadt, from which he intended to bring home a bride in the person of the baron's only daughter, to whom he had been engaged for many years.

At this announcement Klieber gave a sudden start, and a strange and terrible expression passed over his swarthy countenance. His companion, however, was too far gone to observe it, and Klieber, recovering himself by an effort, exclaimed, in a tone of levity:

"Why, count, what is it you say? Excuse me, but you don't appear to be more than two or three-and-twenty at the outside, and yet you talked of having been engaged to the lady for *many years*?"

"And I spoke truly, Master Rosenthal, as you shall perceive when I explain. Between my late father and the Baron Falkenberg there existed a very close intimacy, and they both wished that their friendship should be perpetuated in their children's union. Accordingly some twelve years ago, while on a visit at the castle of Falkenberg, myself and the baron's daughter were solemnly betrothed in presence of our parents, though at the time I was only eleven years of age, and the young lady scarcely eight. I am now going to fulfil this strange contract; and what is still more strange, myself and my intended bride have never seen each other since the day of our betrothal."

"Indeed! Why then 'tis hardly likely the young lady will recognise you again."

"'Tis certain she will not, nor her father either, for I am much changed since then."

"Ha! ha! A singular affair, truly. But how's this? The flagon is empty! What ho! mine host!"

The landlord once more hobbled into the room.

"Fill the flask, Johann," cried Klieber, "with some of the old wine which I christened the '*sleep-inspirer*;' it shall be the crowning cup for the night."

Johann Lubeck took the flagon from his hand, and as he did so, there passed between him and Klieber a sharp, quick, and peculiar glance of intelligence, which, unfortunately for himself, Count Lindorf was too far gone to remark.

In a few minutes mine host returned, with the flask once more replenished; and then, at a signal from Klieber, again left his guests alone together.

"Now, my lord count," said Klieber, "pledge me, I beseech you, once more, for the concluding draught, in this most excellent liquor, which you will find to surpass, by far, anything you have drank to-night."

And he filled the goblets. The count quaffed off his at a draught; but Klieber, when in the act of raising his cup to his lips, suddenly let it fall, as if by accident, and thus emptied the contents upon the floor.

A minute or two afterwards the count appeared to be struggling against an unconquerable feeling of drowsiness. He staggered to his feet, muttering a suspicion of "foul play," and then falling back in his chair, sunk instantaneously into a deep and death-like slumber.

Klieber regarded him for some moments with a fixed and singular expression of countenance, his fingers involuntarily playing with the hilt of his dagger; then, rising noiselessly from his seat, he approached the sleeper, and thrust his hand into one of the pockets of his doublet. From this he drew out a heavy purse of gold, which, however, he immediately put back in its place again; and then, shifting his hand to the other pocket, he drew forth a small case of morocco leather, which he opened. It contained several letters; two of which were addressed "To the Count von Lindorf," and were signed "Falkenberg;" and two others, appearing to be copies of letters written by Count Lindorf to the baron. Besides these, there were two or three other documents of a legal character; and Klieber, having carefully perused them all, enclosed them again in the case and thrust it into his bosom. He then donned his hat and cloak, buckled on his sword, and quitted the apartment, locking the door behind him. In the corridor beyond he encountered mine host, who immediately inquired,

"Does he sleep, captain?"

"Soundly," was the reply; "and I have obtained all I wanted. And now, Johann, listen to my instructions. When Von Hallé comes here, as he unquestionably will do before daybreak, both to inquire about my movements and to upbraid thee for betraying his secret, tell him my commands are, that he carry off the count and hold him close prisoner till he hears from me again. If he executes this well it shall redeem his past misconduct, and woe to him if he fails; for an affair which I have much at heart depends entirely upon it."

"But if Von Hallé should *not* come here before daybreak?"

"Then let not your guest depart till he does come. I have locked the door of his room, and he cannot escape by the window, because it is

barred without. There" (throwing him a purse) "is gold to reward your trouble and pay your secresy. Send some one down to the scene of Von Hallé's attack, at the turn in the road, and bury the body of the postilion who lies dead there. And now saddle my horse, for I have many a league to ride ere morning!"

The landlord hastened to comply. The horse was brought round to the door of the inn, and Klieber, vaulting into the saddle, galloped rapidly away, taking the road to Carlsrühe. The landlord re-entered his inn, muttering to himself, "Strange being! desperate fellow! 'Tis as much as my life's worth to disobey him; and yet I fear he puts upon me such commissions as will one day bring my neck within a hempen circle. God's will be done! But these are hard times for honest men to live in!" So saying, he drew from his pouch the purse which Klieber had given him, and having carefully counted over its contents, betook himself to rest.

II.

> You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
> With most admir'd disorder. *Macbeth.*

On the summit of one of the noble range of hills called the Bergstrasse, between Heidelberg and Darmstadt, stood, at the period of our story, the Castle of Falkenberg; a timeworn monument of the chivalrous ages. Though nearly six hundred years old, the castle was still habitable, scarce a particle of it having fallen to decay; and its grey frowning turrets and moss-covered walls presented a very imposing and picturesque aspect when viewed from the valley beneath. The prospect around was as beautiful as ever gladdened the eye of man.

About a quarter of a mile from the castle, on the northern side, were the lightning-shattered ruins of an ancient tower, known amongst the peasantry as the "Tower of Refuge;" so called from the circumstances of an old tradition, which, bloody and marvellous, had given a terrible celebrity to the pile.

It is evening: a week has elapsed since the events detailed in our last chapter. The Castle of Falkenberg presents a very animated scene of festivity and merry-making. This day the young and beautiful daughter of the baron has been united in marriage, and guests have poured in to witness the ceremony, and take part in the sports and rejoicings which succeed it, from all the surrounding neighbourhood.

Light streams from every window of the castle. In the great hall, a time-honoured and spacious apartment, adorned with the trophies of the chase, is assembled a gallant and goodly company: many of them dressed in a style of magnificence which might shame the court of a monarch.

Nor have the lower orders been excluded from the general revelry; for the huge and comfortable kitchens of the castle are filled with a motley company, composed of esquires, foresters, woodmen, cooks, scullions, and peasants, who are met with a full determination to do ample justice to the baron's good cheer, and to testify a sense of enjoyment as genuine as it is uproarious. The banquet is concluded, and the company in the great hall are forming themselves in order for the dance.

The bride is a very beautiful young creature of twenty years of age,

in a dress of rich white satin trimmed with ermine; and, with her long black tresses surmounted by a wreath of orange-blossoms, she may be said, in her almost infantine grace and the strong contrast she presents to the somewhat noisy revellers around, to resemble Psyche in the Bower of Loose Delight; or, if the reader dislike this comparison, we will call her the personification of Spring; or, borrowing the words of the poet to assist our own crude fancy, describe her as

A form of life and light,
That, seen, became a part of sight!

It was easy to see how dearly she loved the man who had that morning, at the altar, sworn to protect and cherish her; for her large, dark, expressive eyes were fixed trustingly upon his face, as if in that vast assembly she could see no form but his.

In the description of the bridegroom we need not linger; for, though known to the fair Agnes, the baron, and the guests, as Count Lindorf, he was in fact no other than the reader's quondam acquaintance, Captain Klieber!

He presented a somewhat different appearance than when we last saw him, however. His handsome person was encased in a suit of blue velvet trimmed with silver lace, while a star of the same metal adorned his left breast, and a magnificent gold-hilted rapier depended from his side.

The dancing having been continued for some hours, the guests became fatigued, and a pause ensued, during which those who could find seats gladly availed themselves of them, and the rest lounged about the room, or conversed apart in groups. In the midst of a momentary silence, somebody jestingly proposed tale-telling; and one of the most distinguished guests, the Chevalier von Neumann, turning to their host, suddenly remarked:

"By-the-by, baron, I was told a strange story this morning, by one of your foresters, concerning the old ruined tower on the northern side of the castle—the Tower of Refuge I think they call it—though, to judge from its appearance, the name seems somewhat *mal-apropos*."

"Ha! ha!" laughingly returned Baron Falkenberg, a hale old man of sixty, with grey locks and a weather-beaten visage; "what, the knaves have favoured you with some of their superstitious absurdities already, have they?"

"Nay, the man's manner was so earnest that I cannot but attach some weight to his words. He assures me that the tower is haunted, and brings forward many miraculous coincidences to prove the fact. At all events, I deduced from his words that there is some legend connected with the ruin which is tolerably well authenticated; and if that be the case, I dare say you are acquainted with it?"

"I am so," replied the baron; "and if you have patience to listen I will relate the story."

"By all means!" exclaimed several of the guests at once. And amidst a profound and general silence, the baron commenced narrating the following

LEGEND OF THE TOWER OF REFUGE.

The tower was built in the time of the Crusades by Christian von Falkenberg, my ancestor and the founder of our line, and was intended for a fortress, or place of refuge for himself and family when harassed by the predatory attacks of the neighbouring barons. Hence its name. In those days, I am sorry to say, the greater part of the feudal chiefs who inhabited the banks of the Rhine were little better than brigands on a larger scale, and a system of pillage and civil warfare was carried on very frequently to a fearful extent. Too powerful for the hand of the law to reach, they set the laws at defiance. Each chief was a monarch on his own domains, and ever ready to increase his possessions at the expense of his weaker neighbours. With the view of a refuge from these encroachments the place was built of very strong proportions, the walls being of an enormous thickness, and pierced with loopholes for the convenience of the defenders, and the gates and doors constructed entirely of iron.

Fate, however, had ordained that it should be made use of for a worse purpose than that of repelling aggression.

Christian von Falkenberg had an only daughter, called Bertha, who, at the age of eighteen, might have vied in beauty with any of the ladies of Germany; but whom the selfish ambition of her father had destined to be the bride of a powerful nobleman of Wurtemburg, who had acquired an unenviable notoriety, as much for his cruelty and avarice as his harsh manners and repulsive aspect.

As may be readily supposed, the maiden was decidedly averse to the match. The character of the proposed bridegroom was alone sufficient to have filled her with disgust, but a still stronger motive was afforded in the fact that she loved another. This secret lover, whose fine qualities of mind and person had taken captive her young heart, was of very humble origin, being no other than the son of an honest yeoman, a vassal on her father's domains. Nor let this circumstance excite much surprise, for such things were not of very uncommon occurrence in that age of general ignorance; for many of the proudest nobles in the land were unable to write their own names; and though the pride of birth placed an insuperable barrier between the lord and the peasant, Nature is more impartial than Fortune, and the sons of the soil may fairly be supposed to have often excelled in mental capacity the equally uncultivated patricians. Be that as it may, it is certain that Gaston Waldsmidt and Bertha loved each other with a deep and devoted affection, that they had frequently met in secret in the grounds attached to the castle, and that at length, on the occasion of one of these meetings, they were surprised by no less a person than the Baron Christian von Falkenberg himself.

Now it had so chanced that only a few days previously the baron had communicated to his daughter his wishes respecting her marriage, and had been startled and enraged by her reluctance to comply. The true cause of this reluctance was now at once made apparent to him, and his rage and fury knew no bounds. He gave orders for the immediate execution of Gaston Waldsmidt, without even the mockery of a trial; and despite the tears and prayers of the wretched Bertha, the barbarous

command was obeyed by the brutal retainers, and the body of the ill-fated peasant was quickly seen swinging from the battlements of the castle.

Then, turning to his daughter, the baron sternly demanded if she were now willing to accept the man of his choice. But Bertha partook largely of his own resolute nature, and far from being intimidated into submission, she cast one despairing look at the breathless body of her murdered lover, and then, turning to the baron, replied, with pallid face but flashing eyes, "No! I will rather endure the worst you can inflict!" Having said which, her overstrung nerves gave way, and she fell to the ground insensible.

The baron was for a moment absolutely speechless with rage. Accustomed hitherto to a ready submission at her hands, the resistance he now met with roused all the worst passions of his violent nature. He conceived a diabolical plan for subduing his daughter's will, which he resolved to make trial of immediately. There was in the Tower of Refuge a dark and gloomy dungeon, constructed for the reception of prisoners of war when the baron was at feud with any of the neighbouring chieftains, and which he found likewise convenient as a place of temporary confinement for refractory vassals. To this place he ordered the retainers to carry the still senseless form of his daughter; and then directing them to sever the head of the murdered Gaston from the body, he bade them throw it into the dungeon. This done, he locked and barred the door; and having intimated to his daughter that she would remain there till she was ready to comply with his wishes, he returned with his attendants to the castle. Bertha was left the sole occupant of the tower, with the ghastly head of her lover staring her in the face.

But that night Christian von Falkenberg dreamed a fearful dream. He thought that an angel of gigantic aspect stood by his bedside, and while its eyes of fire burned into his bosom's core, exclaimed in a terrible voice:

"Christian von Falkenberg, thou hast done a fearful deed, for the which thy days are numbered! Think not to escape. *The same hour which shows thee thy daughter lying dead at thy feet, shall bring about thine own destruction!*"

Waking in great agitation, the baron summoned his favourite esquire, and in an agony of terror repeated to him his dream. The esquire implored him to fly at once to the tower and release his unhappy daughter, as the only means of averting the threatened fate. The baron consented, and set off at once for the tower; which having entered, he advanced to the door of the dungeon; when at this moment an undefinable feeling of dread came over his mind, and he paused irresolute on the threshold. Making, however, an effort at self-control, he threw open the door and entered. His worst fears were realised. There on the ground before him lay his daughter, cold and dead.

Overwhelmed with horror and despair, she had torn her robe into slips, twisted them together, and strangled herself.

Trembling in every limb, the baron staggered from the dungeon and rushed into the open air. But there new terrors awaited him, for he was met by a messenger from the castle, pale with apprehension, who informed him that his hereditary enemy, the Baron of Steinfels, was advancing to-

wards the castle at the head of a powerful body of armed retainers, evidently with hostile intentions.

Christian von Falkenberg, who was brave as a lion in presence of an armed foe, rousing himself at this intelligence, hurried back to the castle, and collecting his men together made rapid preparations for defence therein, for there was no time to remove his people to the tower. But it is needless to describe the particulars of the siege which followed. Suffice it that Christian von Falkenberg, being slain in the engagement, the castle was taken, and remained in the possession of the Baron of Steinfels and his successors for two generations, when it was recovered by the grandson of Ferdinand von Falkenberg, the younger brother of Christian, and has never since gone out of the possession of the family.

"Such," said the baron, in conclusion, "is the Legend of the Tower of Refuge as it has been handed down to us through the lapse of ages. I have only to add, that about twenty years ago a peasant returning from his labour one dark and stormy night, fancied that when passing by the tower he saw a light shining through one of the broken casements, and heard peals of loud and unearthly laughter echoing through the pile, so that he reached home in great terror; and the following day the story getting abroad with numberless exaggerations, the place was at once believed to be haunted, throughout the whole neighbourhood; and when at length a serf, more bold than his fellows ventured for a wager to visit the tower at midnight, he returned again half-dead with fright, and declared that he had seen a white-robed female figure glide by one of the windows, hugging in her arms the ghastly head of a decapitated man. The story gained credence with the superstitious dolts who heard it; and since that time no one has been found bold enough to pass near the place after nightfall. Moreover, it is asserted, on the authority of some old tradition, that the shade of the murdered Bertha will haunt the tower till the race of Falkenberg is become extinct."

A deep silence succeeded the baron's last words, each person appearing to be absorbed in reflections on the narrative they had listened to. At length the pause was broken by Klieber, who was standing with Agnes near the window at the further end of the hall, and who suddenly remarked:

"The night will be a stormy one, baron, if we may judge from the appearance of the horizon. I have observed that dark clouds have been gathering there since you first began speaking—as if," he added jestingly, "the genii of the elements had listened with displeasure to your story."

"Ah," said the Chevalier von Neumann, with a slight shudder, "don't jest upon such matters, count."

"Why, my dear chevalier," exclaimed Klieber, "*you* don't surely put credit in supernatural phantasies?"

"I believe," said the chevalier, solemnly, "that there may have been instances in which the spirits of the departed have returned again to earth and haunted the scenes of their misery or happiness while living. Moreover, I think it not improbable that the air we breathe, the viewless regions of space, may be tenanted with such spirits. Undoubtedly such things are wonderful, and passing our narrow comprehension, but we

should not reject them as impossible on that account. I think, with the great English bard who is lately dead, that

> There are more things in heaven and earth
> Than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

Klieber laughed; and, turning to the baron, said:

"And what is your opinion, baron? Do you put faith in the chevalier's theory? Do you believe in his phantom creed?"

"No," replied the baron, laughing in turn, "I lack some of the chevalier's imagination. Like you, my dear count, I do not believe in the existence of anything upon this earth that may not be seen with the eyes, heard with the ears, or tested with the touchstone of reason. No, no; rely upon it there are no such things as ghosts and goblins!"

Scarce had the baron finished speaking, when a terrific clap of thunder appeared to shake the castle to its foundations, and the clouds to which Klieber had alluded, suddenly breaking asunder, sent forth several successive flashes of fearfully vivid lightning, which darted through the open window (it having been thrown open to cool the room), and appeared for a moment to fill every part of the hall.

The baron drew back amazed, the guests hastily crossed themselves, and Agnes uttered a shriek of alarm, and clung to her husband's side.

Before they had time to recover from this first surprise, old Rodolf, the baron's steward, hastily entered the room, and addressing himself to his master, exclaimed:

"Pardon me, my lord, for this abrupt intrusion, but there is a stranger without who demands to see you without delay, and will take no denial from me."

"What manner of man is he, Rodolf?" inquired the baron, in surprise.

"He would not give his name, my lord," returned the steward, "but by his manner and appearance I judge him to be of gentle birth."

"I will come to him, then," said the baron; "lead on." And he followed Rodolf from the room.

Conversation, suspended till then, was resumed amongst the guests, and their nerves began to recover from the shock which they had received. But a cloud rested on the brow of Klieber, and despite the anxious looks of his young wife, he stood apart in gloomy abstraction.

In a few minutes the baron returned, looking pale and agitated; and with him, unarmed, his dress torn and travel-stained, and his face white with suppressed passion, no less a personage than the true Count Lindorf.

The instant he caught sight of Klieber he exclaimed vehemently:

"There stands the vile impostor! Villain! can you look on me with composure?"

Klieber, standing with folded arms, gazed at him sternly and fixedly, but made no reply. The guests gathered round in wonder and astonishment.

"Count Lindorf," said the baron, addressing himself to Klieber in a tone which slightly faltered, "I have just listened to a tale which has smitten me with surprise and consternation, and which, were it true, would prove you the blackest villain in existence. This personage calls himself by your name and title, and declares you to be an impostor! His story is, that on his way to this castle he was attacked by robbers between Rastadt

and Carlsrühe, was rescued by yourself, and afterwards conducted by you to an inn in the Black Forest, where he was made insensible with drugged wine, robbed of his papers, and on the following morning carried off by robbers, who he firmly believes acted under your orders. By them he was kept prisoner for several days, until at length, having succeeded in effecting his escape, he makes the best of his way hither, and arrives to find you the husband of his promised bride! Disprove this dreadful accusation, I charge you on your honour!"

"Let him disprove it if he can!" exclaimed Count Lindorf, fiercely.

Klieber regarded him with a look of scorn, and, still preserving his composed demeanour, turned to the baron and said, in a deep, half-melancholy tone:

"Baron Falkenberg, you are justly served. Nothing can efface from my memory the deep and deadly injuries which I received at your hands in times gone by. Look on me, baron. Regard me well! Have the lapse of ten years, the ravages of toil and care, and the keen breath of the elements, wrought so great a change that you recognise not in these lineaments the features of Leopold Klieber?"

At that dreaded name the baron turned pale, Count Lindorf started, the guests shrank back amazed, and Agnes uttered a cry and sunk to the ground insensible.

Taking advantage of the general consternation, Klieber lifted her inanimate form in his arms with as much ease as he would have done that of an infant, and springing at one bound through the open casement, disappeared in the darkness beyond.

In an instant the hall was a scene of wild confusion. The ladies screamed, the cavaliers drew their swords; some rushed to the window, others to the door, blocking up the passage both ways in their well-meant but disordered haste. The baron was the first to reach the outer gates of the castle. He was followed closely by Count Lindorf, who had armed himself with a hunting-spear. But the night was pitchy dark, and the baron shouted for torches. These it took some time to prepare; and thus, when the party commenced the pursuit, the robber had gained a start of several minutes. The search was fruitless, though continued for more than two hours with unwearied assiduity. If the earth had opened and swallowed up the robber and his burden when he alighted on it, he could not have disappeared more effectually, nor have left smaller traces of his whereabouts.

Even the Tower of Refuge was searched in every part by the baron and Count Lindorf, though none of the others showed any willingness to enter it. At length, the Chevalier von Neumann proposed that they should return to await the appearance of dawn, and then resume the search by daylight. To this the baron reluctantly consented; and wearied, silent, and dejected, they retraced their steps to the castle.

NICOLAS FOUQUET.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

It would be difficult to select from the records of modern, or even ancient history, teeming as they both do with startling and dramatic incidents, a more instructive, or a more affecting instance of the instability of earthly prosperity—of the folly of placing confidence in princes—of the danger of relying on their permanent favour—of the delusion of trusting in their smiles—than the one which describes the rise and fall of the celebrated Nicolas Fouquet, as portrayed by the eloquent Alexandre Dumas, in his "Life of Louis XIV. of France."

Bequeathed, as it were, to the state by the expiring Cardinal Mazarin, Fouquet naturally concluded that his services would be as indispensable to the living monarch as they had been to the defunct minister, and he prepared accordingly to govern his sovereign by the power of his illimitable wealth, and by the strength of his stupendous talent; but Louis looked upon him, from the moment of his emancipation from the trammels of Mazarin, as a dangerous and despotic rival; concealing the deep designs of the financier under the shallow servility of the courtier; and hence nourishing that secret implacability against him which ever envenoms the proud heart aiming at absolute and undivided authority.

Still, Louis had never openly evinced this hidden and rankling detestation—probably never would have openly evinced it, had not the audacious minister, arrogant in success, provoked an explosion of royal wrath, by also attempting to become his rival in love as well as in dominion.

Then it was that the long-smouldering flame of smothered abhorrence, fanned by the breath of jealousy, burst forth to destroy the man placed on such an eminence, that his conspicuous elevation cast a shadow on the throne of France, drawing all eyes from its obscured lustre to the dazzling glory of his obtrusive and prominent exaltation. The haughty, the exclusive, but pecuniarily-crippled monarch, learned that his lavish subject had dared to offer a bribe of half a million to Louise de la Vallière, then the supreme idol of his soul, to induce her to abandon the king's for his meaner embraces. Nor was this proof of matchless prodigality —of matchless effrontery—the sole mortification which the envious and indignant Louis had to endure from the princely Fouquet—for, perhaps to awaken a latent regret in the bosom of the favourite for the splendour which she had rejected, or perhaps urged on by that inevitable fate which had predestined his ruin, he, about this time, solicited the honour of giving a grand entertainment to the king and his court, at his chateau of Vaux, for which it is stated he had paid the enormous sum of fifteen millions; and which fact was well known by all.

If, then, the downfal of the ambitious minister had not already been resolved on, this ostentatious and magnificent *fête* would have determined it; for Louis, in consenting to accept it as an homage to *himself*, still thoroughly believed that his appearance merely lent a colour to the true motive of such an extravagant display, which was to enchant and seduce the senses of his mistress; and, as he was conducted from room to room, each one surpassing the other in gorgeousness, until his own

senses ached at the cloying repetition of voluptuous and Oriental luxury he beheld, he was devising in his galled and festering mind the surest and speediest manner of effecting that tremendous downfal. Little did the exulting Fouquet think, as he obsequiously ventured to arrest the gloomy train of his monarch's meditations, to attract attention to some unique statue, some rare picture, which he alone could afford to purchase, that he was accelerating the decree of perpetual captivity! Little did he think, as he expatiated, with the enthusiasm of a connoisseur, on the intrinsic worth of the gems of art which he alone could afford to possess, that he was arousing in the vivid and vindictive imagination of that brooding monarch, the dismal contrast of the dank and dreary cell, whose ungarnished walls would so soon enclose him for ever! Little did he think, as he marked the flashing of that monarch's eye, that its light was but an emanation of the blastings of the storm shortly to break over his defenceless head, and overwhelm him in the midst of his most apparently secure calm!

Alas! for the illusions of man!—the day whose anticipation had cost him a pleasure so acute as to amount to the most exquisite agony—the day whose fruition had been so glorious as to make dizzy his reeling and intoxicated brain—the day whose dawn was like the birth of joy—whose meridian glowed as the high empyrean—whose eve was radiant with the beams of beauty—was to end for him in clouds and darkness!

When wearied with the fatigue of that delight which such a day of triumph can alone occasion, and he sought his pillow, and yet could not sleep for the throbbing of his temples, beating in unison with his heart as he recalled every circumstance of that eventful, that amazing day (and yet not being able to remember one the slightest thing which had occurred to mar its perfect and complete enjoyment), he felt, indeed, that he could say, without a chance of self-deception, "Take thine ease, oh my soul, for thou art above the reach of adversity! thou art beyond the malice of misfortune!"

Alas! for the illusions of man! at that very hour, Louis, equally indisposed to sleep, was also reviewing every circumstance of that day of triumph—of triumph for his minister, of humiliation for himself—being but too able to recollect the many, many things which had occurred to mar its enjoyment for him, and soothing his irritated spirit by the prospect of immediate and signal vengeance.

Fouquet, at the imperious command of irresistible might, was dragged like a felon from his superb abode, with the perfume of its fragrant exotics still clinging to his almost regal robes—with the echoes of its fountains still reverberating in his ear—with the exclamations of irrepressible admiration still sounding in his heart—to be immured in a noisome and cheerless dungeon—to grow familiar to its silence and its solitude—to grow familiar to its monotony and its tedium—to grow familiar to his own society—the most perplexing of all intimacies for a man to form who has lived so entirely for others as to lose all self-identification, all self-association. To languish there, to pine there, to be forgotten there, to mourn there, with none to sympathise—to become wise there, with none to congratulate—to die there, with none to deplore.

And Louise de la Vallière, she to whom this victim was so ruthlessly immolated, did she never atone for the caprice of passion which decreed

so barbarous a sacrifice to her subduing but evanescent influence? Yes—dearly, dearly did she pay for it—pay for it with the costliest recompense which woman can offer—her warmest but despised affections.

The king who could remorselessly consign a supposed rival to a living tomb—the king who could reverentially stand bare-headed before her for two hours during a raging tempest—the king who had so sued, so pleaded, so struggled to overcome the resistance which her innate modesty opposed to his designs, immersed in new pleasures, fascinated by new attractions, could as remorselessly suffer her to hide her shame and her sorrow in that living tomb, which, but for him, she never would have considered as a refuge vouchsafed by heaven to penitence and prayer, as but for him she had never been driven by contrition to seek its shelter—for, but for him, she had escaped sin.

There is something so pure, so irreproachable in the attachment of Louise de la Vallière for Louis XIV., that it almost sanctifies the union between them which no civil rites sanctioned. She, indeed, loved the man apart from the monarch—she, indeed, loved him for himself—loved him holily and faithfully as a woman does love, when undebased by selfishness, when undegraded by vanity—loved him as woman does love, when the heart responds to every protestation, the heart inspires every sentiment, the heart repugns every deceit, the heart rejects every dissimulation.

The love of Louise de la Vallière has been palliated by the most rigid, pitied by the most callous, for it was awakened in her young and guileless bosom ere to encourage it entailed ignominy, and it would have remained unrevealed in that young and guileless bosom, when its admission did brand with disgrace, had not a complicated and demoniacal subtlety betrayed her unsuspiciousness—had not a tarnished virtue made a veil of her innocence to screen its turpitude—and, although she fell into the snare so artfully spread for her—although she yielded to seductions such as scarcely ever tempted woman so strongly before, she never became the depraved mistress, the unblushing courtesan—and then, for her venial fault, what severe repentance! What tears for herself, what charities for others! What aspirations for retrieving the past, what prayers to propitiate the future!

Who, in pondering on her short and brilliant career—the celebrity which was as a reproach to her—does not lament that she did not escape the contagion of a court, the addresses of a king?—does not lament that she did not remain in the unpolluting obscurity which protects from the evil eye of greatness?—does not lament that her lot should be cast in the fertilising soil of that vice which is licensed to sin, licensed to propagate sin?

Who, in pondering on her short and brilliant career, with its after years of suffering and of sorrow, does not feel his soul melt with the most intense commiseration?—does not feel his heart burn within him?—does not feel his lips kindle, as His kindled who was of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, to say, as he said to her who rent her heart and not her garment, "Neither do I CONDEMN thee?" Alas! although her groans never penetrated the walls of Angers, to mingle with the sighings of the poor prisoner there, they both ascended up to that God who, knowing their sincerity, accepted them accordingly; to mingle with gladness of the saints and angels, who rejoice more over one sinner that

repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons, who need no repentance.

Alas! although her tears were never shed within the walls of Pignerol, whither the miserable Fouquet had been finally transported, to mingle with his incessant and despairing ones, they did not fall unobserved by those saints and angels in the sunless gloom of that Carmelite convent where her life was withering away for the want of the light of hope. Alas! although her agony and remorse never reached the knowledge of him who languished and faded also for the want of that cheering radiance, they were known, that agony and remorse, to those saints and angels, and the cry of her soul resounded through the centre of empyrean, when, learning the death of her son, she exclaimed, "O God! he hath died BEFORE thou hast granted me time to repent sufficiently for his birth!"

Oh, had Fouquet ever known her reverses, her sufferings, her desertion, and her penitence, he would have surely melted to a commiseration so divine as no taint of passion would have polluted; a commiseration which so fully forgives as not to recollect revenge—as not to desire revenge; yet, did he not become acquainted with those chances, those changes, those vicissitudes, when, after twelve years of solitary confinement, he was aroused from his unsocial torpor by a voice from without—a voice of the world—a voice of another victim of a tyrant's jealousy and a tyrant's power?

Still, would Fouquet have believed the report? Did he not doubt the events as utterly incredible which Lanzern did recount to him?—events which, although enacted by himself when he played a distinguished part on the great but shifting scene of ambition, he could no longer credit when time had blunted his energies—when oblivion had dimmed the flame of high aspirings—when sorrow had benumbed the sensations that rose in the swelling heart, impetuous as the boiling and bubbling Geyser, to destroy the heart the cooler springs of moderation would sweetly irrigate!

Whether he ever did become acquainted with those chances, those changes, those vicissitudes, here, or not, is of small importance now, as he has long, long since learnt them where truth alone is revealed; as he has long, long since been restored to freedom by Him who unbindeth the chains of the captive; who unlocketh the doors of the dungeon for the egress of the released soul, that it may wing its bird-like flight to the realms where shackles are not—where kings imprison not—where passions mislead not—but where the spirit regenerated hath no remembrance of the pains and the penalties of earth—but where it hath a never-dying remembrance of the pleasures and the rewards of heaven.

NOT A JUVENILE MATCH.

It was evident that Mrs. Kroll must have experienced great happiness during her married life, for there was not an old lady in the town who took such delight in making matches as she did. No sooner did she hear of any eligible party who had not already entered that happy estate, when a long catalogue of marriageable ladies floated before her mind's eye; and inexhaustible was her ingenuity in devising new channels through which she might reach the hardened hearts of old bachelors. You would have been amused to see her sitting, with her snuff-box on one side and a cup of coffee on the other, engaged in most earnest conversation with one of her many cousins, or the mamma of some aspirant to matrimony; with what radiant countenance she passed in review all the daughters of the land, and not only knew the amount of the fortune of each of them, but also the source from which it flowed. She would, in those confidential meetings, go on for hours in the following strain:

"I tell you, each of those girls brings her husband a thousand dollars in addition to her outfit!* I knew their mother, before she married; her maiden name was Berner, and her father has inherited one of his brothers, who died a bachelor, and who bequeathed to him at least thirty thousand dollars."

And not only did she interest herself in behalf of rich heiresses, but had also at her disposal hearts with more humble pretensions; sedate ladies to suit widowers blessed with three, five, seven, or nine children; strong-minded women who could undergo some hardships; in short, young and old were provided for. Yet, as soon as the marriage was settled, she scrupulously abstained from interfering any further in the affairs of the couple whose union was owing to her exertions; neither would she claim any merit if matters turned out well, nor feel any responsibility if the reverse was the case.

She had already made good use of her time during the life of her late husband; for not being blessed with sons and daughters herself, she devoted all her energies to provide in the first place for her relations, and actually seven nieces and three god-daughters had through her means been well married, to clergymen, town clerks, government officers, and other desirable partners. Throughout the country, therefore, some happy nephews and nieces of hers were to be met with who had good cause to bless her name. But at the time of which we are writing she found herself reluctantly obliged to repose on her laurels. For miles round all the widowers and bachelors were suitably provided for under her auspices; all the young *employés* and curates were engaged, and there was only one obstinate attorney who, in defiance of her, was leading a miserable bachelor life with an old housekeeper, just opposite to where she lived, and whom she had long since given up in despair. Longing to find a new sphere of action, like a soldier thirsting for gallant deeds in the time of peace, she sat one morning, pensive, with her hands in her lap, in the

* Generally including, in Germany, not only the personal outfit, but also bedding, table, and house linen, and very frequently the greater part of the furniture.

attitude described above, in her comfortable little room at the breakfast-table, when her landlord, as usual, sent up the newspaper.

The political part of the paper she never noticed; whether there would be peace or war in the world was a matter of the utmost indifference to her; and as for the budget, she refused to hear anything more about it since she found that the price of coffee and sugar was not going to be lowered. What interested her most dearly were the advertisements of deaths and promotions; as for those who advertised for wives, she considered it a most outrageous proceeding, and was shocked at the mere idea that any lady could make up her mind to marry under such circumstances.

One day she was eagerly perusing the notices of deaths; it was but a small catalogue, containing no name which she knew. "No one of any consequence dies in these days," she angrily exclaimed, quite unconscious of the wickedness of her remark. The next paragraph was more cheering, and ran as follows: "His Majesty has deigned to promote to the rank of captain, first and second lieutenant, &c." This was of the utmost indifference to her, since she had never interested herself for the army. But then came the announcement: "The living of Schniezingen has been assigned to the Rev. G. Brommeler, of Bergmuhl." This fell like dew upon thirsty soil, and a wide field of action was opened to her by these few words. Was not Schniezingen the nearest village, scarcely three miles from where she lived? and was it not a capital thing that the tiresome curate was dismissed, who had been so bold as to take a bride of his own choice—a young lady of Baden whom no one knew anything about? Was not the Rev. G. Brommeler a cousin of hers, and a widower these three years? What a prospect! what numerous plans were suggested to her. Full of zeal and excitement, she at once sat down to write a letter, reminding the reverend gentleman of his being her cousin, congratulating him on his good fortune in obtaining such an excellent living, and offering her services if she could be of use to him in any little domestic arrangements. After having carefully concluded this epistle, she surveyed with complacency her further plans of operation. A widower without children! she was still in doubt to whom she should allot such a prize, for the Rev. G. Brommeler was still a hale, robust man, in full vigour. This needed mature consideration. But perhaps he is no longer a widower? she then thought. Two years ago he was still unmarried, but she had then heard that his housekeeper had set her cap at him, and it was not altogether impossible that the exertions of this wicked person should have been crowned with success. She all but flew into a passion at the thought of such an eventuality, for, as the reader is already aware, not one marriage was unobjectionable except those which had been arranged under her own auspices.

Happily she remembered that Mrs. Rutscher, a cousin of Mr. Brommeler, and an old friend of hers, was now living at a neighbouring town, which was only fifteen miles distant. She had been thinking of going there for some time past to buy a gown. In her inability of coming to a decision from numerous patterns which had been sent to her, she thought the best plan would be to set out on that most important errand in person, and at the same time to make all necessary inquiries with regard to Mr. Brommeler. She therefore engaged a seat in the stage coach.

for at that time there were neither railroads nor omnibuses—and made preparations as for a journey round the world.

Travelling by the stage coach had this inconvenience, that you were obliged to be in readiness at four o'clock in the morning, a task of some difficulty for an old lady. Salome, her antiquated maid, was sent running about the whole day before, till everything was properly arranged. Half a pound of coffee had to be fetched as a present to Mrs. Matcher according to the good old custom; then rolls were to be baked for the early breakfast, as at such an early hour nothing could be had at the baker's; furthermore, the baker's boy was ordered to call them by ringing the bell an hour before starting; also her best cap had to be sent to the milliner's, and her fine merino dress to be well brushed. After having made all these preparations, both the mistress and her maid went to bed at seven o'clock in the evening, in order to be sure to awake in time.

After a wearisome journey, packed between her neighbour the brazier, two maids in search of places, and the driver's family, between bandboxes, trunks, and chests, Mrs. Kroll at last arrived in town, half-dead with fatigue, and scarcely able to move. She would have liked to have made up for the loss of her morning's sleep, but every time her head began to nod it got into dangerous collision with the cauldron which the brazier had hung up in the coach. It was nearly ten o'clock when she alighted. She at once proceeded to Mrs. Rutscher, whom she hoped to secure as a companion to assist her in the choice of a dress.

A shower of rain was threatening when she arrived at the residence of her friend, and thus a nice cup of coffee and a warm room would have been very acceptable. But to her dismay the door was wide open, the maid, with her dress tucked up, was busily scrubbing, and gave but short answers. Mr. Rutscher was at the castle, she said, and was not expected to return home to-day; and the mistress was in the country attending on her daughter during her confinement. The maid not even being civil enough to ask her to walk in, she had no other alternative than to proceed on her errand. But just as she was turning from the door with a deep sigh, a very prim lady of a certain age, who had overheard the conversation, walked into the house with a wet umbrella.

"Mrs. Rutscher will, indeed, be sorry to have missed such a rare visit," said the lady; "she has frequently spoken to me about you. But sure you do not mean to go away in such weather as this? Pray walk up to my little apartment."

Mrs. Kroll, even before she arrived in the upper story, had quietly managed to gather from the servant the information that her new acquaintance was a Mrs. Senner, the widow of a clergyman. After innumerable bows and courtesies, Mrs. Kroll was at last induced to accept her hospitality, and partake of a cup of chocolate, which Mrs. Senner, who did not boast a servant of her own, prepared with her own fair hands, apologising all the time for so frequently absenting herself. Mrs. Kroll even yielded to her entreaties to stay for dinner, which consisted of but scanty fare, since Mrs. Senner, who had her meals supplied to her from an eating-house, seemed to have forgotten to order dinner for two. However, she made up for the deficiency by an excellent cup of coffee, which had the effect of rendering her fair guest and herself very communicative. In the course of their conversation Mrs. Kroll soon made

the interesting discovery that the father of the clergyman's widow had lived in the same town with her own father, and had even been on intimate terms with him; it was therefore assumed as quite certain, that the two ladies had known each other as children. What a comfort to meet old acquaintances!

Mrs. Senner, though dressed in cheap stuffs, evidently devoted great attention to her toilette, and wore flowers and sky-blue ribbon on her cap, showing that she was still anxious to be considered young, which at a little distance might still be believed, if you overlooked her false hair and toothless mouth. The melancholy situation in which she found herself since her husband's death formed the chief topic of conversation. Hitherto she had had two sons of a wealthy cousin as lodgers, and by this assistance she had been enabled to defray the expenses of her household; but latterly they had been taken from her and entrusted to the care of a tutor, so that there was no alternative left to her but to go and live at the house of a stepson of hers, which was very sorely against her wishes indeed!

Mrs. Kroll expressed great sympathy for her new friend; and as the latter accompanied her to all the shops in the town, where half the stores had to be brought down to them before they were able to decide, their acquaintance soon ripened into the closest intimacy. Having at length made her choice in the last shop, Mrs. Kroll seemed highly satisfied with her purchase; and she felt quite sure that there was not such another pattern and such a fast colour in the world; no, no, not one so elegant and yet so simple. This purchase, and some rice, of which she had bought a good stock at a farthing a pound cheaper than she could have got it at home, very nearly put the real object of her visit out of her mind altogether; nevertheless—after having kept the coachman waiting for three-quarters of an hour, while the butcher was finishing some excellent cheap sausages recommended by Mrs. Senner—she departed in high glee, calculating all the way how much she had profited by this journey.

Mrs. Kroll had not, indeed, been able to gather any particulars concerning her friend, the Rev. G. Brommeler; but her suspense was soon at an end, as four days later she received a letter from himself, in which he thanked her most politely for the kind interest she had taken in his behalf, and mentioning his lonely condition, informed her that his housekeeper would take the fixtures, provided that there was a kitchen-range and a little oven, and everything in good order. So he was a widower still! This important fact once ascertained, she was in a condition confidently to proceed with her proposed plan of operation. And now a bright idea suddenly struck her. Mrs. Senner would be the wife for Mr. Brommeler; there would then be no need for the estimable widow to live with her stepson; neither of them had a family; why, it was the very thing; they couldn't be better fitted for one another. Mrs. Senner was, indeed, no longer young, but she was still presentable—very! The more she considered the thing, the surer she felt of success.

When her cousin, Mr. Brommeler, arrived six weeks after to take possession of his new living, Mrs. Kroll received him at her own house, regaling him with an excellent cup of coffee previous to his introduction, by a deputation of his parishioners, to his snug and well-furnished par-

sonage. From that hour Mrs. Kroll began to carry out her plan of operation. Miss Philippine, the old housekeeper, who was constantly hovering about her master with the greatest officiousness, had instinctively conceived a great antipathy towards Mrs. Kroll, which she did not take any trouble to disguise. The first thing to be done was to weaken her influence, and to convince Mr. Brommeler of the necessity to provide himself with a suitable partner. With a view to this object she expressed her amazement at the great consumption of wood, sugar, and coffee; she found his linen dingy, and not at all well got up; and she always made a point of winding up her lamentations with a sigh: "Of course, how should it be different, where there is no wife to take care of things?"

Mr. Brommeler occasionally alluded to a sedate parson's daughter in the neighbourhood, to a young widow, and even to Miss Philippine herself, but Mrs. Kroll discovered so many weighty objections against each of them, that he never ventured even to mention the name of these ladies again. At last, after having been at him for some months, she succeeded in bringing him to the point. One day he said,

"Well, my dear cousin, can you find me a suitable partner?"

Here was an opening.

"Indeed, I think I know a lady who seems quite the thing for you."

"Not too young, I hope?" the gentleman interrupted her.

"Oh dear, no! how can you think I should advise you such a thing? She is quite a sedate person, and a widow."

"Really?" replied Mr. Brommeler; "but I must tell you, cousin, that although I should not, indeed, wish to marry for either youth or beauty, yet I should object to a person who is already advanced in age; elderly ladies have very often peculiar ways; and I should like to have some one to cheer me; a lady—you understand what I mean—who has still some good looks; if only for appearance' sake before my parishioners."

"Indeed, the very thing; the lady of whom I speak is such a lively person; she can converse on all subjects; her good looks are well preserved, and she dresses with remarkable good taste; I believe she cannot be much beyond forty."

Mrs. Kroll stifled her scruples of conscience with the thought that her statement "not much beyond forty," allowed rather a wide margin.

"And then," said Mr. Brommeler, "I am growing older every day" (he was on the shady side of sixty), "and should like to have a person who would be able to nurse me when I am sick; for even men of the most robust health may occasionally be taken ill."

"Just so," Mrs. Kroll replied; "her first husband had been laid up for ten years with the gout."

In short, the good lady grew so warm in her professional zeal as a matchmaker, that, before she had done, her friend was transformed into a priceless pearl: no wonder that Mr. Brommeler was fairly burning with desire to behold with his own eyes this precious jewel. The old lady was now in her element; she promised to arrange a meeting for next Monday, and took her departure highly satisfied with herself, returning the pert courtesy of Miss Philippine with a look of scorn and triumph, and walking, in spite of her sixty-seven years, with as light a step as if she were going to be married herself.

Her preparations for a journey to town proceeded this time with greater speed than before, and on this occasion her new dress was for the first time exhibited to the world. She found Mrs. Rutscher at home, but she lent but little ear to this lady's account of her daughter's confinement, of the strength and beauty of the baby, and other equally interesting topics, although that marriage also had been arranged under her kind superintendence. As soon as she could do so with any propriety, she hurried up to Mrs. Senner, who was already making her preparations for her dreary journey to her stepson's. As Mrs. Rutscher accompanied her, Mrs. Kroll of course could not refer to the important subject in hand, and was therefore obliged to wait patiently till the other was called away; but in the mean while Mrs. Kroll could not help acknowledging within her own heart that it was just possible that Mrs. Senner was somewhat, although, perhaps, very little, *above* fifty. Mrs. Kroll had anticipated that her friend would jump at her matrimonial proposals, but on this point she was mistaken.

"If the gentleman is too old," she said, "and an invalid, she really could not make up her mind; she needed quiet and repose herself, and suffered so much from an impaired digestion that she required the greatest care; if she knew that much trouble or anxiety awaited her——"

"Dear me! the most quiet life in the world," Mrs. Kroll interrupted her; "the gentleman is still quite robust, and has very handsome property into the bargain! The happiest days are before you; plenty of fat geese; and as for the house, it is in capital condition."

Mrs. Senner now felt a secret longing at the description of such a bright prospect; and promised, although with a great show of bashful reluctance, to come to her on the Monday following. To celebrate this great event, Mrs. Kroll ordered a cake, and returned home in triumph.

Monday came. Salome and her mistress got up an hour earlier than usual in order to make numerous little arrangements. At half-past ten o'clock Mrs. Senner arrived, having availed herself of a very cheap and modest conveyance, yclept the letter-carrier's car. She was arranged in her best finery, a black silk dress and a cap with a sky-blue ribbon. Not a syllable was uttered in reference to the great business of the day. The two matrons had too much tact for that; they dined alone together on a nice little joint of roast veal, their conversation keeping all the while on neutral ground. Salome was, of course, in the secret; and if we may judge from the muttering sounds which proceeded from the kitchen, she did not appear to be much edified with the new candidate for matrimony, whom she had by this time carefully scrutinised.

"Well!" she said, "bless my stars, if my missus hasn't made this time a mighty fine bargain! Sich a howdy! as old as the hills, and not a penny to bless herself with! I declare missus might just as well have taken him herself."

At two o'clock Mr. Brommeler's carriage arrived; a very respectable turn-out for a country clergyman. When Mrs. Kroll gave her *protegée* a significant nudge, the latter felt something very like a palpitation, although her heart was already a little too rusty to be easily troubled with such emotions. Mr. Brommeler, who had descried the ladies at the window, attempted to alight from his carriage with a youthful step, but

if old Mathias (his coachman) had not lent him a hand, he might have cut a somewhat awkward figure. He was still a hale and good-looking old man, though a little stiff in his limbs; and a short watch-chain, with a number of gold seals dangling from his black silk waistcoat, smartly relieved the grave clerical air of his dignified and portly presence.

Mr. Brommeler greeted the ladies with a stiff but most polite bow; yet he was somewhat startled at the sight of the antiquated beauty who had with such fervour been represented to him as the most angelic being in the world, and he whispered to Mrs. Kroll with an evident feeling of disppointment:

"But did not you say forty?"

"Well," Mrs. Kroll in a propitiating tone interrupted him, "suppose she is fifty, she isn't after all the worse for it." After having said which, she cleverly cut short any further remarks on his part by taking refuge at the tea-table, where Mrs. Senner was already established.

The conversation was neither animated nor brilliant, since Mrs. Senner, in order to conceal her absolute deficiency of teeth, spoke but little, and that little only with very indistinct utterance; whereas the clerical gentleman, to hide his deafness, replied only by, "Oh yes; of course; indeed," &c.

When Mrs. Kroll had wholly exhausted her stock of conversation, and had cleverly expatiated on the merits of Mrs. Senner, as well as of the good living of Schniezingen, she resolved to try her last resource of leaving the couple alone. The conversation now became duller than ever, till Mr. Brommeler, from mere embarrassment, walked up to the window and remarked, "What a very fine view!" Mrs. Senner joined him, and politely assented to this opinion, in which, if the truth must be told, both he who gave, and she who shared it, proved themselves to be very unpretending lovers of the beautiful; for in the narrow street there was no object to meet the eye but the blacksmith's shop opposite, with a neglected garden all running to waste. Mrs. Kroll, who became rather impatient, after a while peeped through the keyhole, and when she saw them standing together at the window, she naturally supposed that he was coming to the point, and in order to help him on at this critical juncture, she opened the door, and exclaimed: "Pray, cousin, do give utterance to your feelings;" and again withdrew.

This was very hard upon the poor cousin, who would have been only too happy to creep into a mouse-hole if it had been anyhow possible; whereas his feelings at that moment were of the most uncomfortable description, and might, if given utterance to, have been expressed thus: "I wish to goodness I were well out of this." Mrs. Kroll's exhortation, however, gave a serious turn to the matter. Mrs. Senner had put a different construction to the words of her friend, for, bashfully casting down her eyes, she addressed Mr. Brommeler: "Indeed, it has required much consideration on my part. My late husband was such a truly good man;—but the fact is, I feel more and more my lonely position in the world." What could the good parson do now? He had too much of the chivalrous sentiments of the good old times to desert a lady under such peculiar circumstances; and when Mrs. Kroll again entered, he gracefully took Mrs. Senner's hand, and raising it to his lips, introduced her as his bride elect.

Mrs. Kroll was delighted, and spared no pains in making both of them sensible of the excellent choice which each of them had made. She went herself to the cellar to fetch a couple of bottles of old Rhenish wine, which she had saved ever since those happy days when her own dear departed was still among the living, and which were now produced to raise the—alas! flagging—spirits of the accepted suitor, and to nerve him for the critical moment when he was to communicate the news to Miss Philippine.

Mrs. Senner was a very happy bride, and most thankful for the snug berth which had thus been provided for her declining years. The gentleman ventured once more to remark to Mrs. Kroll:

"Cousin, I should say she must be rather above fifty."

"Well, then," she replied, "suppose she was even fifty-five; what does it matter?"

Thus he became at last reconciled to his fate, and lavished as much tenderness on the angel who was now going to be his own as might have been expected of any inconsolable but consoled widower—a tenderness, by-the-by, which always reminds me of a second infusion of tea made very sweet in order to supply the want of flavour.

The wedding was not long delayed; for as, from the certificate of baptism of the bride, it appeared that she was already near sixty, the happy couple had, indeed, not much time to spare. Miss Philippine left the parsonage with all the dignified pride of unappreciated worth, and throwing out sundry dark prophecies even before Mrs. Brommeler entered her new home with the few worldly goods that she possessed. The family coach having been newly varnished, Mr. Brommeler conducted his bride to all the evening parties of the neighbouring clergy, and to other gay reunions, and was always very anxious to see her dressed in the latest fashion, as far as it would become her tender years.

There was not, indeed, much mutual nursing. When Mr. Brommeler had rheumatism in his back, his wife complained of pain in the limbs; when he felt his ears ring, she was labouring under dimness of sight; so that the tables were finally turned, for the gentleman stepped out like a robust old man, whilst she clung to his arm a trembling old woman. But he was as patient as Job, and never complained. At length Mr. Brommeler engaged a poor relation, who accommodated herself with patience and gratitude to the humours of the aged couple.

Thus, amidst all their lamentations on the badness of the times and the infirmities of old age, they lived together in great harmony, and Mrs. Kroll was long spared to be a witness of the happy union which she had effected. They even celebrated the silver jubilee (the twenty-fifth anniversary of their wedding); and when the husband was gathered to his fathers at the ripe age of eighty-nine, his little old woman was still alive to close his eyes with the sure prospect of soon following him.

AMBROSE THE SCULPTOR.*

This is not a common novel, either in respect to its subject or the treatment of it. Among the various walks of fiction into which the modern novelist has been tempted to wander, there is none that has as yet been so little trodden as that of Art. But it would be strange if this path were not likely to be frequently and worthily pursued by writers of the present day, since the manifest diffusion and improvement of taste —in its widest sense—among the people calls loudly for a corresponding supply of literature adapted to their enlarged capacities.

Both France and Germany have preceded us in this line: in fact, it lay more naturally open to their writers than to ours, inasmuch as the artist on the Continent generally occupies a higher social position than he does in England. We do not now propose to enter into the question how this comes to be the case, still less to deal with that of finding a remedy for this unmerited neglect; reflections on these points will most readily suggest themselves to those who peruse with attention the life and troubles of "Ambrose the Sculptor."

In the countries of the Continent art seems to be much more the business of the people than it is with us; a greater number seem imbued with a certain degree of taste for it, and this surely leads to a certain degree of knowledge of its principles and requirements: the public seem to have a greater capacity for enjoying its productions, while the gifted few who rise to eminence in any of its walks excite a greater interest in every class than they seem to do in London.

The life of an artist cannot fail to give ample scope for the display of a knowledge of human nature, of the workings of genius and passion, of distress and perseverance, of courage under difficulties—all pointing to a final moral. No hero of romance offers so fine a subject to the writer who knows how to make the most of it. This has been exemplified in "Wilhelm Meister," in "Consuelo," and in a few other foreign works—why may we not hope for the development of so rich a mine in English literature?

Modern readers do not require to be startled by wonderful adventures; they look for something of deeper moral significance. The solution of some practical difficulty, or a keen insight into the sources of mental trouble, are far more attractive to us than the tower of the knight or the cave of the bandit. The reason is, that we read to extract something of use even from the slightest tale, where our fathers expected merely a passing excitement or amusement even from the most laboured composition. And artist life is full to overflowing of practical and moral cares, of excitable sensibilities, of all that works most powerfully on both head and heart.

But it is time to proceed to the story. In the present work we have to remark that the narrative is better made out, and the incidents follow each other more naturally than in either of the authoress's former productions. The story, in short, hangs better together; the tale is more continuous, and shows signs of greater attention to the necessities of plot and machinery than was the case in either "Lamia" or "Christabelle." There is no going backward in order to understand what is

* Ambrose the Sculptor. By Mrs. Robert Cartwright, author of "Christabelle," &c. Smith and Elder. 1854.

going forward, no complexity in the action, no interweaving of a preliminary history with the main business of the novel.

In addition to the same sort of beauties which we admired in "Lamia" and "Christabelle," we find in "Ambrose" some excellent qualities of its own, which are not to be overlooked.

One of the chief of these, in our opinion, is the skill with which the catastrophe is delayed, while something seems ominously impending, during all the latter part of the book. We see too evidently that something must happen, something untoward, in so troubled a *ménage* as that of poor Ambrose, but we are led on to hope for the best.

Another good point—and it is one too much neglected by young writers—consists in the self-command which the authoress has shown in keeping every character within due bounds, by which they appear as if rather sketched by a master than laboriously full-painted by an amateur. The part of every person in the novel might be carried further—each one gives the reader an idea of character beyond what is expressed, so that the outlines are most naturally filled up by the suggestions arising from the perusal. Thus, on reading the conversations of the Italian *virtuosi*, one imagines fifty points of wit and humour that they might have been made to say;—in the self-consequence of the Welsh squire,—in the free-and-easy talk of the gay marquis and his friend,—in the artist's supper, and many other passages, just enough is said to enable those in the least conversant with the kind of society described, to supply in idea the materials of a richly-conceived scene that might have been too long for narration. So with the charming descriptions of Italy, of Wales, &c., they are so true, though so little is said, that one stroke conveys a picture to the mind more surely than could have been done by the most studied painting.

Ambrose Arnold is the son of an English artist, of wild but acknowledged talent, who had been long domiciliated at Rome. While a young man he had made a tour in Wales, where he had met with the daughter of an old Welsh baronet, and persuaded her to marry him against the wishes of her proud and aristocratic family. She was, in consequence of this marriage, discarded by them, and went to Italy, where she and her husband settled, and the hero, Ambrose, is the only son of this union.

The story opens with the sudden death of the father, whose irregular life and vicious courses have ruined his fortunes, and who leaves to his family nothing but his name and talent. The widow, reduced to the utmost distress, writes to her brother, Sir Caradoc Owen, for assistance, and obtains a small pittance for her support. Her principal care is for her son, who resolves to follow the artistic career of his father, and takes to study under the teaching of an eminent sculptor and friend of his mother's, named Vitelli.

Lord Montacute, a former patron of his father's, befriends Mrs. Arnold and her son most liberally, and as will be seen in the sequel, remains their constant friend through life.

During his course of study under Vitelli, Ambrose has frequent opportunities of cultivating the friendship and losing his heart to Carmen, the lovely daughter of the old sculptor. She, however, is sent to complete her education in music at the Conservatorio of Milan, where she makes wonderful progress, and finally prepares to appear on the theatre

of La Scala as *prima donna*, in a new opera to be written for her *début* by her master, Feliciani. The subject chosen is the "Promessi Sposi," the national tale of Lombardy.

Vitelli resolves to go to Milan to witness his daughter's first performance, and leaving Rome, is speedily followed by Ambrose. We pass over some very good description to arrive at the first striking scene of the novel, the opening of the theatre, and appearance of the *prima donna* on its boards:

"Viva la nuova prima donna!" was echoed from voice to voice among the crowd, though as yet they knew nothing of her or her talent. The friendly words—whencesoever they came—fell sweetly on my ear as I was on the point of entering the theatre. Nothing is so kind and good-natured as a mob in good humour; at the right moment they are all milk and honey: "E viva Carmen Vitelli!" replied another voice, which was quickly repeated with cheers from the populace.

I found myself at last in the great theatre of La Scala; I made my way with some difficulty to the side-box where Vitelli, in all the nervous anxiety of an artist and a father was awaiting the first appearance of the child on whom his every thought was centred.

We must extract the musical part of the description, which seems written evidently by a practised hand, and to be the product of a mind to which music is no stranger:

But the overture first of all demands, at least, a passing word. It opened with a strain of great tenderness and simplicity, such as naturally brought to the mind ideas of peace, happiness, and love; the quiet contentment of peasant life in the secluded valleys of Lombardy, varied with snatches, cleverly introduced, of the well-known airs of the contadini of the Val Camonica, and gradually warming in fire and richness into one of those swelling melodies which are sure to carry the feelings of an Italian audience along with them. A pause, a change of style: the music becomes severe, hurried, expressive of rage, cruelty, and evil passions; varied at times by slow and lugubrious wailings, long moanings, and notes of grief, pain, and intensity of human suffering, melting away at last into passages of the deepest pathos. Another change: the music is again chaste, elevated, and solemn, approaching as near as the religious character of the composer would permit, or propriety sanction on an Italian stage, to the music of the church; bearing no direct resemblance to any known service, but leaving on every mind an unmistakable impression of its intention.

Once more the strain slowly but gracefully descends from its sublime and sacred character, softening by degrees into somewhat that recals the sweet sounds of peace and love with which the overture commenced: once more the light-hearted peasant-ballad of Val Camonica is heard in the distance, but all ennobled in expression, and enriched in harmony, as the swelling notes proclaim the holy triumph of innocence and virtue over the ills of a troubled life, as the lovers are finally restored to their happy home.

It is impossible to describe music better, or to fancy a better pattern of an overture, which ought to be to an opera like the heading of a chapter—a distant shadowing forth of its contents. But we must proceed with the story.

After the representation, Carmen, whose success has been most brilliant, returns to her father's lodging, where he gives a very characteristic Italian supper to a select circle of amateurs and of the chief artists of Milan.

We regret that want of space forbids our extracting this very good piece of national painting. But we must mention some personages who figure there for the first time, and of whom we hear more as the story proceeds.

There is Scheiner, a German savant, philosopher, and connoisseur in almost all arts, especially music; Kranitz, a German painter, a wild, extravagant genius, and *assez mauvais sujet;* Guido Torricelli, the first singer of the theatre, and a rival of Ambrose for the good graces of Carmen. Much wit, in true Italian style—which is faithfully depicted—shines at the supper. The dialogue between the Maestro Feliciani and Scheiner on the respective merits of Italian and German music, though short, is admirable, and those who have seen a regular Italian jollification will not fail to recognise the likeness.

After much discussion, the two parties happily agree upon the merits of Mozart, and separate—friends.

Carmen's triumphs continue—she even reconciles the Milanese public to a German opera, "Fidelio:" upon the music of which there are some excellent remarks made by the authoress.

In the midst of this whirl of love and pleasure, Ambrose is recalled by his mother to Rome. She has written to her brother (whose wife, the principal cause of their estrangement, is lately dead), and receives an invitation to return and fix herself and son at Plas Owen. After a time, Ambrose and his mother proceed to England by the road of Milan. In the diligence they meet with a loquacious Abate, from whom they learn that Guido Torricelli has been nearly killed in a duel with Kranitz, on account of their rivalry in Carmen's favour, and the Abate complains "Cosi è sempre con quei Tedeschi. Debbono morire nostri Italiani e poi scappano loro." To add to the calamities of poor Carmen, who was quite innocent of love for any but her own playmate Ambrose, she catches a fever, and loses her voice beyond recovery.

Mrs. Arnold, not altogether sorry that her son should be separated from a girl whom she does not now think quite a match for him, takes Ambrose with her to England, and they are soon lodged in the family castle in North Wales.

Sir Caradoc's testy character and old-fashioned habits are well touched; he has one daughter and heiress, to whom Mrs. Arnold earnestly wishes to see her son married. He remains, however, true to his first love, until he hears that she and her father left Milan immediately on her convalescence, and had undertaken a voyage to Cuba for the recovery of some Spanish property, and that both she and her father had died there. This sets him at liberty, and he is soon accepted by his cousin, Lilith Owen, a most amiable creature, as her husband. Mrs. Arnold dies happy.

But there is a tide in human affairs. The very evening before the wedding-day, Ambrose receives a letter from Lord Montacute to inform him that Vitelli only had died in Cuba, that Carmen had returned to Europe, and was seeking from her early friend the best advice how to establish herself. Ambrose had ignorantly placed the letter unread in Lilith's hands: both are struck to the ground by this intelligence, but Lilith is firm, and tells Ambrose that honour requires that he shall keep his first engagement to Carmen: advice that he follows perforce.

So ends the first volume. In order not to break the thread of the story, we have omitted to notice some new personages who figure in the latter part of the work. The following extract will explain their position:

"So then," said he (Sir Caradoc), "Lord Corwen is come down, for the last time probably, and no one in the principality cares whether it be so or not."

"Why for the last time, sir?" I inquired; "I saw in the newspapers that he was expected to retire shortly from his post abroad, and what more likely than his residence or more frequent visits to his paternal estate?"

"Trust him for that, nephew. Lord Corwen will never leave the public service while it is his advantage to stay in it. I know him well enough for that. He comes here only to raise money."

A friend of Lord Corwen's, le Marquis de Marigny, is also introduced at Plas Owen, much to the discomfiture of the Welsh baronet. "He was a characteristic specimen of the noblesse of the south of France .... he was, in short, although willing to be taken for a cavalier of the ancien régime, a very decided courtier of the new."

These two gentlemen (we had almost forgotten a third, the self-sufficient *attaché* to Lord Corwen's embassy) all aspire, though in vain, to the hand of the heiress. Though dismissed at this juncture, we hear of them again afterwards.

The second volume opens with the quarrel—inevitable between our hero and his uncle. He leaves Plas Owen, however, on good terms with his amiable cousin, hastens to Rome, and marries Carmen Vitelli. By the advice of Lord Montacute they come to England, and settle at Brompton. Ambrose diligently follows his profession, and Carmen teaches music, Lord Montacute constantly patronising them, and proving himself the guardian angel of the family. Kranitz also comes to London, and gains eminence as a painter.

Misfortune, however, follows them. Kranitz and Ambrose are all but ruined by a bad speculation in German mines, Carmen is persecuted by Lord Corwen's attentions, and Ambrose, whose jealousy is as blind as his love, quarrels with Lord Montacute, who will not quarrel with him. All is set right, however, at last, but Ambrose and his wife, together with Kranitz, are obliged to renounce art and emigrate to America.

While there, Kranitz dies in consequence of injuries received in rescuing Carmen's baby from a fire which causes the total destruction of their log-house, and has barely time to confess himself the author of all the base calumnies which have caused Ambrose's jealousy and Carmen's blighted fame, and their consequent exile from England.

Ambrose and his wife are reduced very low after this event, but accidentally reading in an English newspaper the death of Sir Caradoc Owen, he writes to his cousin, who with the kindness of a sister invites them to live with her, as she will never marry. They return to England, and after living for a considerable time at Plas Owen, where Ambrose assists in managing Lilith's great estate, a fresh and irremediable trouble befals him. This is Carmen's unreasonable jealousy of his cousin, which at last drives her to madness and suicide.

In this part of the book there are some beautiful passages, and pretty bits of poetry. We think, too, that the visit of Ambrose to Kranitz, where he overhears the conversation of Lord Corwen and his friend the marquis, very well done.

As everything affords food for love, so everything may afford food for the opposite passion; and Carmen's little girl Julia is the unconscious cause of serious misunderstanding between her jealous mother and the kind, hospitable Lilith, who nearly spoils her.

There is a pretty little child's ballad, from which we must cull a few stanzas:

JULIA'S KINGDOM.

How fair is the kingdom
That calls Julia queen,
The merriest monarch
That ever was seen!

Her empire a garden,
A turf seat her throne,
With flowers for court ladies
In bright colours grown.

. . . . .

The moles are her labourers,
Skilful they toil;
They dig, and they drill,
And they turn up the soil.

The worms and the beetles
They work in the mines,
And the spiders are weavers
Of pattern designs.

The gnats gather taxes
Where tribute is due,
And the ants are shopkeepers,
And busy ones too.

. . . . .

The wasps are all lawyers,
Get out of their way;
And the slug an old usurer
Gorging his prey.

. . . . .

For all that she sees
Of the life, that around
In these her dear subjects
Doth spring and abound,

Hath been called to existence
To share and divide,
By Him who made Julia
And all things beside.

There is very natural feeling in the verses beginning—

Another sleepless night;

and in

Yes, she is mine, and I am hers.

It will be, perhaps, objected that there is too much of foreign languages for common readers introduced into the dialogue of the work, but it is so well done, and so naturally fits into the scenes and society represented, that we are sure that no readers who are capable of appreciating those scenes will disapprove of it.

In the appendix are notices of some pieces of sculpture Ambrose is supposed to have executed; some of which are so happily imagined that we wish some artist in search of a subject would choose one of them on which to exercise his talent. Among these the idea for a statue of Jephtha seems to us so good that we must extract it:

NO. 8.—JEPHTHA.

A statue of almost colossal proportions. A warrior of the grandest Jewish type, herculean in limb, commanding in feature and dignity, stands alone, but

in a moving attitude, or rather as one transfixed by a deadly stroke from an unseen hand ere he can pause from his weary march. His sword, half-sheathed, is by his side; his shield is cast behind him, with a wreath of victory flung on it—a prize now neglected, for his eye sees afar off his triumphant daughter (not in the sculpture) with her joyous maidens—and he has remembered his vow!

Many readers will be startled at reading in such positive terms of operas never composed, statues never executed, and pictures never painted; but the ideas are so good and well imagined that they make their own excuse. Both "Lamia" and "Christabelle," as well as the present work, have some good examples of this bold manner of giving hints, we hope to be followed, to future artists.

The style, as usual in the works of our authoress, is free and untainted with the cant—we will not call it the slang—either of fashionable or unfashionable society: the moral unexceptionable, as the story is original.

The lesson inculcated is that of perseverance in industry, and adherence to principle in all the changes of life. Ambrose, who lays open his whole soul to the reader, may now and then appear inconsistent in his thoughts—in his conduct never. That honest weakness, which neither foresees evil nor guards against it, is but too compatible with the most resolute industry, and with the highest moral principle. And on these grounds we can safely recommend "Ambrose the Sculptor" to our readers.

We cannot conclude without warmly approving the verses beginning—

I stand beside a nameless grave—
A nameless grave; and is this all
Of that fair girl, that blooming bride,
The lovely image to recal?

The whole poem is full of pathos and deep feeling.

A LION-STORY.

THE name of Gérard—the lion-hunter—is a household word in France. His exploits have spread from mouth to mouth till his name is as familiar with the young of the present generation as is that of Duguesclin, or of Bayard the *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*. When De Saulcy and his companions were on the shores of the Dead Sea, they saw, or fancied they saw, the foot-prints of a lion, whereupon the learned archæologist very wisely remarks: "As we are none of us *des Gérard*, so we ardently hope not to find ourselves nose to nose with the proprietor of the paws which left those immense marks." Gérard is, indeed, a name in France before which that of all other hunters, from Nimrod downwards, fade away into utter insignificance; and before which those of our lion-hunters of the Cape, tiger-shooters of Bengal, and elephant-destroyers of Ceylon, may not even be mentioned. Yet, like all men of true courage and worth, Gérard is himself a modest man, and he tells the story of his exploits with singular modesty and *naïveté*. We could prove this by

many curious extracts from his interesting account of lion and other hunting in Algeria, but we must content ourselves for the time being with one long and very stirring lion-story:

A few days after the return of the expeditionary column of Kabylia, in the month of June, 1853, I left Constantine for the Auras mountains, having received intelligence that an old lion had taken up his quarters near Kranchala.

The Arabs, wearied with the losses they had experienced, had assembled together a short time previously, to the number of two or three hundred, intending to kill it or drive it from the country.

The attack began at the first break of day; by noon five hundred shots had been fired; the Arabs had carried away one dead and six wounded, and the lion had remained master of the field of battle!

On my arrival in the valley of Urtan, the 18th of July, I received a deputation from each of the duars in the neighbourhood, which, after the usual complaints, offered a general gathering in arms. Sidi Amar, the marabut of the place, also came, and brought me his blessing.

"If it pleases God," he said, "to bless your arms, in a few days our wives and children will come here under this tree to count the teeth and the claws of the malefactor, and to kiss the hand of the man who brings peace into the mountain."

At this prediction of the marabut's the proposition of a general appeal to arms fell to the ground, and every one of those present went off to his tent, satisfied that it was all over with the lion.

If I had believed Sidi Amar I need not have quitted the place where I stood; the lion would have come there to meet his death.

Whatever might be my confidence in his prediction, I thought, however, that the application of the proverb, "Help yourself and Heaven will help you," could do no harm, so the same day I obtained all possible information upon the habits of the animal, and I gave instructions to my huntsmen for the day following.

The duty these men had to perform was to start at break of day, each in the direction appointed to him, to search for traces of the lion upon the roads that neighboured his haunt, and to ascertain by which he went out and by which he had returned the previous night.

The next day, the 19th, the lion having taken a distant trip on the plain, and the huntsmen finding no traces of his having returned by the time the herds efface all such in their own progress, they all rallied upon the lioness and drove her, by about nine o'clock, into a wood of about ten acres in extent.

The same day, at seven o'clock in the evening, I had taken up my station at the point at which she entered the wood; at eight o'clock she came out within six paces of me, and fell at the third ball.

On the 20th the place of meeting was appointed for mid-day in the garden of Urtan, for anticipating that the lion, being in quest of his mate, would give the hunters a good deal of trouble, I fixed the time two hours later than usual.

The lion, after having beat the pathways and explored several haunts, killed a mule and two oxen belonging to a duar on the mountain, after which he went off to the southward along the crest of the hills. His last feat had been performed at a distance of nine miles from where we had assembled.

I got on horseback at four, and repaired to the spot where the huntsmen had given up the traces. After having sent back my horse, I waited till it was night, to beat the road the lion had followed the previous evening in taking its departure; about eleven o'clock, not having met him, and hearing the Arabs and dogs of the duars that lay at the foot of the mountain make a great noise, I thought that the animal had returned by another road, so I took my way back to my tent.

For three days the result of the researches made were the same, the lion

adopted the same strategy at night, and in consequence long marches were made but no rencounters.

The 24th, an Arab, living nine or ten miles south of my encampment, was sent to me by his neighbours to say that the lion had taken up his quarters in a wood called Tafrant, and that on the 20th he had killed eight oxen.

I started in company with this man, my spahis and huntsmen, leaving my tents at Urtan, and only taking with me my arms.

I passed the night of the 24th and 25th outside of the boundaries of the duar which the lion was in the habit of visiting, but he did not come.

The 25th, in the morning, my men had seen the lion go out of the wood, but had not seen him return. In order to diminish the fatigue of the huntsmen, and make their task one of greater facility, I took up my quarters, on the 25th, on the outskirts of the wood.

I was joined the same day by M. de Rodenburgh, a Dutch officer, who, after having been with us in the expedition of Kabylia, was desirous of experiencing some of those strong emotions, the memory of which remains always, and which are not to be found in great cities. He came from Urtan, where he had pitched his tent by the side of mine on the 19th.

At ten o'clock at night the lion was heard roaring at about a couple of miles distance from the duar, and at midnight he carried off a sheep at a few paces from where we were. The 26th, at break of day, orders were transmitted to all the duars to let neither men nor beasts go out before the huntsmen returned, so that the traces of the lion should not be effaced by other traces.

The same day Bil Kassim Bil Yucat made the following report to me:

"I took up the lion's traces at the entrance to the duar; I found the skin of the sheep that he ate the night before; I followed him to the rivulet where he drank, and I then left him to be followed out by Amar ban Sigha, my colleague."

Amar arrived at the very moment that his friend was terminating his brief recital. His face was beaming, every one felt that he had discovered the lion's den, and that he was sure of what he was going to say.

As he traversed the crowd of Arabs who were grouped around the tent which they had set up for our accommodation, they interrogated him by words and gestures, and even pulled at the skirts of his burnus, but he did not answer them; the satisfaction which overflowed in his face alone betrayed the secret, which he only wished to confide to me.

Unfortunate man—so proud of the victory which he had prepared for us, and little anticipating that in a few hours the lion, which he came to deliver up to me, would only perish on his body, after having torn him to pieces!

This was the report:

"I found that the lion had drank at the rivulet of Tafrant, where he made a brief stay. I followed his traces thence across a burnt wood which you can see from here, and in which, to judge by the marks he made in several trees when sharpening his teeth, and by the traces of the morning, he must have remained all night.

"On leaving the burnt wood, the animal traversed a torrent which borders the wood of Tafrant to the east, and into which he went: I skirted the wood by following to the south, and then to the west, the current of the stream, and the road to the north; the animal had not gone out; I returned to where I last lost his traces, and leaving my burnus there, I penetrated into the wood to within gunshot of his haunt.

"The men who accompanied me being unwilling to go any further, I got back without making any noise, feeling convinced that he lay at the foot of a white rock, known in the country as *the Lion's Rock*."

The haunt of the animal being thus determined, it only remained to choose among the different modes of attack adopted in such cases.

The first consists in marching openly and noisily right upon his haunt, which induces him to come out and meet his assailants, who wait for him in an advantageous position.

The second is to follow his traces with the greatest precaution and silence, so as to surprise him when asleep. The third consists in attracting him by means of a living bait.

The 26th, at seven o'clock in the evening, I started, taking with me my spahis Hamida, and my two huntsmen carrying my arms and dragging with them a goat. At half-past seven we arrived at where Amar had found droppings, the sight of which rejoiced me exceedingly. It was easy to see that they belonged to a great old lion, or, as the Arabs called him, my friend of Kran-chala.

His haunt was situated on the southern slope of the mountain, and not above a hundred paces from the ravine. Upon the opposite slope, and upon the borders of the same ravine, I found a glade about ten square yards in extent, surrounded by large trees, and distant about one hundred and fifty paces from the stronghold where the lion reposed himself.

Whilst one of my men was tying the goat to the root of a tree in the centre of the open space, and the others were giving me my arms, the animal himself came forth and looked at what we were doing.

I hastened to take up a station on the skirt of the wood, facing the lion, and five or six paces from the goat, which, seeing my men hurrying away into the wood, shrieked out lustily, and made the most extraordinary efforts to get near me.

The lion had disappeared. No doubt he was advancing beneath the dark vault of the heavy forest, which hid him from my view.

I had just cut a few branches off with my dagger which lay in the way of my sight, and was going to sit down, when the goat suddenly ceased to shriek, and began to tremble in every limb, while he looked one moment in my direction, another in that of the ravine, which meant to say,

"The lion is there, I smell him, he is coming; I hear him; he comes, I see him!"

And so it was in reality; at first it had only perceived its emanations; then, when it had heard its footsteps, its ears had expressed the fact to me by their quick convulsive movements; lastly, when it could see the beast, I could see it also.

The lion mounted the declivity of the ravine slowly, and then stopped on the borders of the glade at about twelve paces from me. He stood right opposite to me, and his capacious forehead presented a splendid mark. Twice I lifted up my rifle—twice I brought it to bear between his eyes—twice my finger pressed the trigger gently, but the gun did not go off, and I felt a strange pleasure in the self-imposed suspense.

Two years had now elapsed that I had not met with so great, so handsome, and so majestic a lion, and I could not kill him without examining him at my leisure.

What is a dead lion? What is a beautiful woman in a coffin? Beauty without life; that is to say, ugliness.

And then again, if it is true that to live is to feel, when and where could I find emotions such as I then experienced, unless it were on such another rencounter, in such a place, at such an hour?

The noble animal, as if he understood my thoughts, had lain down, and after having crossed his enormous paws, he had quietly laid his head down upon them as upon a pillow.

Without paying the least attention to the goat, which was paralysed with fear, he examined me with considerable interest, sometimes winking his eyes, which imparted to his physiognomy a most benign aspect, sometimes opening them to twice their full size, which made me involuntarily press my rifle. He seemed to be saying to himself:

"I saw just now, in this glade, a number of men and a goat; the men are gone, the goat remains alone; I come and I find near it another man, clothed in red and blue, such as I have never seen before, and who, instead of running away from me, looks at me as if he wished to speak to me."

Then again by starts, and as the shadows of evening kept creeping over the wood, he seemed to add, but always talking to himself:

"The hour for dinner is getting near—which shall I eat, the goat or the red man? The sheep of yesterday was better than this goat, but the sheep are far off. Red men are, perhaps, generally tender, but this one appears to me to be thin."

This last reflection appeared to have determined his choice, for he rose up with a decided aspect, and took three paces in advance, his eyes fixed upon the goat.

My rifle to my shoulder, and my finger on the trigger, I followed every movement, ready to fire whenever a favourable opportunity should present itself. Twice he crouched like a cat, as if about to spring upon the bait.

I thought that the cord which held the goat puzzled him, and I felt certain that he suspected a trick, when I saw him go and come anxiously up and down the skirt of the glade, showing me his teeth when he stopped.

The game was becoming too serious; it was time to bring it to an end. Taking advantage of a moment when he turned his side towards me, at a distance of twelve paces, and on the borders of the ravine, I struck him with a first ball, right in the shoulder, and immediately afterwards, whilst he twisted about, roaring with pain, hit him with another beneath the shoulder-blade.

Pierced through and through by these two balls with points of steel, the animal rolled like an avalanche down to the bottom of the ravine.

Whilst I was reloading my rifle, my men had run up; I went with them to the spot where I had struck the lion, and we found, amidst a mass of blood, the marks of the animal's claws, where after he was hit he had tried to mount the declivity of the ravine.

My men, persuaded that the lion was dead, had gone to the heights that neighboured the glade to give the signal for other men to come and help to carry it away.

At the same time I followed the blood marks in the bed of the ravine into which the lion had tumbled, and I found that he had got into the wood at a spot where it was particularly dense, indeed almost impenetrable.

In order to know at once what I had to expect, I threw a stone into the thicket; a deep guttural moan, with an alternate expression of suffering and of threat, a moaning which smelt of death, answered me at a distance of about twenty paces.

This moaning filled my heart with apprehensions, for it reminded me of the lion of Mijaz Amar, which six years ago, under analogous circumstances, mutilated under my eyes, and notwithstanding my balls, my spahis Rostam and two Arabs.

On my knees, on the border of the thicket, I sought in vain to see into its depths; my sight could not penetrate beyond the first branches reddened by the blood of the lion.

After having made a mark to recognise the spot where he had entered the wood, I was going to withdraw, when my spahis, my two huntsmen, and four Arabs came up.

I had all the difficulty in the world to prevent them going at once into the thicket, where they insisted that the lion lay dead.

It was in vain that I told them I knew that he was still alive, that it would be impossible to see him till he sprang at one of us, and that there would certainly be a death if we went at that hour; whilst I could answer for it that we should find him the next morning. These brave men, for only answer, took off their burnuses, asking me to sit upon them till they came back.

Two minutes more, and I had taken off such portions of my clothing as might embarrass me, I had armed Amar ban Sigha with my Lepage rifle, Bil Kassam with two pistols, and my spahis with a rifle, which he was instructed to keep loaded, and to follow me step by step.

After having recommended my men to keep as close to me as the thickness of the cover would permit, I went in with them and M. de Rodenburgh, who

had come up and would not remain behind, notwithstanding my entreaties and assurances of the danger he was about to run.

After having walked about fifteen paces, following the tracks of the blood, we found ourselves in a glade, where all such traces ceased. Night was coming on; it was already difficult to distinguish anything, and our search became so much the more dangerous, as in a few minutes all would be enveloped in darkness.

In order that we might lose no further time, every one set to work, seeking in every direction for the blood of the animal which we lost in that particular spot, without at the same time any one actually leaving the glade to penetrate into the wood.

Suddenly one of the Arab's guns went off by accident, luckily without any one being hurt; but the lion roared at a few paces from us, and all my men gathered around me, all except Amar ban Sigha, who, either from inexperience or confidence in himself, leant with his back against a tree at a distance of about six paces from us.

Scarcely had the lion made his appearance on the border of the glade, his jaws expanded, his mane bristling, than eight guns went off at once, but at haphazard, and without inflicting on him the slightest injury.

Before the smoke of all this powder, so uselessly expended, could be dissipated, and in much less time than I take to write it, Amar ban Sigha, who also had fired at the lion, was thrown down, his gun broken in pieces, his right thigh and leg pounded, or rather ground down, and at the moment when I came to his help, I saw that his head was in the lion's mouth, and the latter looked at the barrels of my rifle being lowered at him, merely sweeping his mane to and fro, but without loosing the victim which he had selected.

Apprehensive that I might hit the head of the man by firing at that of the animal, I aimed directly at his heart, and pulled the trigger.

Amar ban Sigha, disengaged by the shot, rolled to my feet, which he grasped with such tenacity that he nearly upset me, while the lion, his side leaning against the branches, still kept his footing.

I took a quiet aim at his temple, and pulled at the second barrel; this time the rifle did not go off.

For the first time for ten long years my rifle missed fire, and the lion was still there, upright against the thicket, which he tore with his teeth and claws, roaring and twisting himself in agonised convulsions, not two feet distance from myself, and almost upon the body of Amar ban Sigha, who shouted like a demoniac.

All the men had run up, some wielding their yatagans, others holding the butt-end of their guns up in the air by the barrel end, as if they were going to knock the lion's brains out.

Small means, poor arms against an animal whom balls will not kill!

My first movement was to stretch out my hand to my spahis Hamida for my other gun. His face contorted, his eyes haggard, trembling in every limb, he could only say—"Empty!"

My second rifle was unloaded! The rash man had fired with the others and left us at the lion's mercy.

Luckily for us he fell dead at this very moment between Amar ban Sigha and M. de Rodenburgh, who arrived through the thicket, where the man and the lion lay side by side.

Poor Amar ban Sigha lived for only a few days: not only were his leg and thigh horribly fractured, but the flesh was literally torn in shreds from the thigh downwards, and when carried away upon an extemporised litter made of guns, branches of trees, and burnuses, he shrieked horribly. As to the Arabs, they shouted and yelled on their nocturnal march, thinking more of the death of the lion than of the sufferings of their countryman. *These things*, they said, *only happen to men!*

THE LAST OF THE HOUSE.

By William Pickersgill, Esq.

XXI.

THE PORTRAIT.

Spring had succeeded to winter. The leafless trees and hedge-rows were clothed with bud. The pastures had assumed the freshness and verdure peculiar to the season. The snow had melted upon the hill-tops, and no traces of it were to be seen. The birds were beginning again to tune their vernal lay—the countryman was again to be seen in the field preparing his ground and putting in the seed—the schoolboy skipping across the green sward with bat and ball—again did the milkmaid, pail in hand, trip through the fields to milk her cows, which once more had been allowed to roam at large. The days had grown longer, and everything seemed to wear a more cheerful aspect than before.

The Wallfords had looked forward to this season with a certain degree of anxiety. It was the first winter they had passed since the death of Mr. Wallford, and it had been a peculiarly melancholy one on that account. The visiting and festivity which had been common to other winters, had only rendered the past one more dreary by the contrast. Besides that, Mrs. Wallford had been frequently unwell, and Dr. Dawdle, although he had not expressed it, seemed to entertain some doubts as to whether she would really survive the spring. The dulness of the winter had, nevertheless, been considerably diminished by the frequent society of Mr. Crumbledust and Mr. Merton. The latter had gradually grown into favour both with Mrs. Wallford and Kate, and every day that passed over their heads, since the commencement of their acquaintance, had only tended to increase the respect in which he was held. The last few months had, perhaps, been the happiest that Merton had ever spent. He had had more leisure to devote to his favourite pursuit than before, and besides that, he had almost every night had an opportunity of being in the company of, and conversing with, Kate Wallford.

The daily insults which he received from Grub; the dry and wearisome details of the office-duty which devolved upon him; his comparatively friendless condition; the remembrance of past sufferings and injuries; the ever-recurring visions of the future—visions of neglect and poverty—all were forgotten—all disappeared before the gloom-dispelling eyes of Kate Wallford. She was an angel; she had been sent by Heaven to be a solace to him in his difficulties; to guard him from temptation; to stimulate him to exertion; to be a compensation for all that he had suffered. She would overlook his personal disadvantages—there were other qualities which he possessed which would win her regard. It was in this way that Merton sometimes debated the matter in his own mind, and persuaded himself that this handsome and accomplished girl would inevitably consent, at some future time, to become his wife. There were moments, however, when he saw things in a different light—when his inferiority, his poverty, presented themselves to him in all their deformity, and convinced him of the unsoundness of his previous reasoning.

It was not long (for women are shrewd and penetrating in these matters) before Kate discovered the secret which Merton had endeavoured in vain to conceal. There are few women who, on making such a discovery, are actuated by feelings of anger. However unworthy the importunate lover may be, he has, nevertheless, paid the highest compliment in his power to the woman he loves—he has paid a tribute to her charms and her influence which she can neither despise nor contemn.

I do not wish to ascribe to Kate Wallford greater virtues than were ever before possessed by any member of her sex. She was indeed a woman placed in a delicate and difficult position, and if, for a moment, she did manifest a degree of weakness, it was only to be expected from the circumstances which occasioned it.

When she discovered that she had won the affections of Merton, she certainly, to some extent, rejoiced in the conquest she had made, and felt flattered at the success which her great personal attractions had achieved. The feeling, however, was one of short duration—it was quickly followed by regret for the attachment which unconsciously, and without any effort upon her part, she had been the means of inspiring. She had every respect for Merton; she admired his ability and the fine qualities of heart which he possessed; she rejoiced that he was the friend and companion of her brother, but it was impossible that a closer relationship should subsist between them. Day after day and she expected he would make some explanation, and thus afford her an opportunity of expressing her own sentiments and relieving him from all further suspense. Weeks, however, passed away, and no understanding had been come to. If Merton had had any penetration, he might have seen how hopeless was his case.

When she directed her conversation to him, when she sat beside him at table, it would be no easy task to describe the joy that agitated his bosom. His happiness was too great for conception—it was greater than in his wildest fancy he had ever dreamed of.

This, however, on her part was all done innocently; she had no idea that her natural kindness of heart and affability would have given rise to so many misconceptions and so much bitter disappointment.

This uncertainty, at length, determined him to seek an explanation. He called one morning for the express purpose. He was nervous and pale. He knew what there was at stake. He knew how important to his own happiness was the answer that his declaration might call forth. Kate was alone; Mrs. Wallford and Fred had gone out upon business. The circumstances could scarcely have been more fortunate; he had never before been alone with Kate—her mother, or brother, or some friend had always been in the room. What varied feelings filled his bosom: he was glad and miserable at the same time. He had never before seen Kate to such advantage. She was dressed in mourning, but everything she wore became her admirably.

"I am glad you have come, Mr. Merton," she said; "both mamma and Fred are out, and I was beginning to find myself very dull."

"They will return soon, I hope?" said Merton, hesitatingly.

"I expect almost immediately."

"And pray, why were you beginning to be dull?" inquired Merton. "Have you not music to beguile the time?"

"I never play for my own gratification."

"Oh! but if you can afford so much gratification to others, it's only reasonable to suppose that, when alone, you will be able at least to afford some amusement to yourself."

"I like rather to hear others play than myself," Kate replied.

"But I am sure the exercise of your skill must afford you infinite delight."

"My skill is of so humble a character that it by no means causes me to be enamoured of it."

"You are very modest, Miss Wallford."

"Not more so, I think, than is necessary."

"That is a matter of opinion."

"I think it is time to change the subject," said Kate, "for I am sure it's but an indifferent one we have been discussing."

"Miss Wallford's abilities are not of so ordinary a description that they should be so soon disposed of."

"However, tell me what you are busy with—what you are painting."

"I am busy with nothing just now. I wish to begin a portrait, but I am not sure that the lady will consent to sit."

"Is she handsome?"

"She is very handsome."

"Then I am sure she will not refuse you."

"Will you guarantee me that she will not refuse?"

"I do not know her temper."

"It is like your own."

"Then I predict your success. We may, perhaps, be permitted to see the portrait when it is finished."

"For the pleasure which you have conferred upon the painter by so frequently suffering him to be in the company of and converse with the original, the portrait shall be presented to you as an inadequate mark of his gratitude."

"You talk in riddles, Mr. Merton. I do not understand you."

"I need not be more explicit. The lady I referred to is yourself."

The conversation had proceeded thus far, when Mrs. Wallford and Fred entered the room. The *eclaircissement* was, therefore, for the present postponed.

XXII.

THE FRENCH LESSON.

Both Merton and Kate were a little disconcerted by the entrance of Mrs. Wallford and Fred. The latter, however, almost immediately dispelled the embarrassment, by saying:

"I am glad, Merton, you are here. I wish you to accompany me to-night to my *maître français:* he is quite an original, and you will be delighted with him."

"Now I don't consider it fair, Fred," said Mrs. Wallford, "to draw Mr. Merton away in this manner."

Merton was selfish enough to wish to remain where he was, but as Fred had invited him to accompany him, he could not well refuse.

"We shall not be long, mother—not more than an hour," Fred said, in reply to his mother's objection.

An hour, however, was either an age or a minute to poor Merton. It was an age when he was absent from Kate Wallford—it was a minute when he was in her presence.

"Well, my dear, but it will be very uninteresting to Mr. Merton to be obliged to listen to your French master's instruction."

"I expect not. I expect he will be greatly amused. *Allons, mon ami—allons.*"

Seeing that Fred was so pressing, Merton at once consented, saying:

"I have certainly frequently heard you speak of M. Bonbon, and I confess that the ludicrous statements you have made to me have somewhat raised my curiosity to behold the man."

"*Eh bien—eh bien. Nous reviendrons bientôt,*" said Fred.

"*Au revoir,*" said Mrs. Wallford, as Merton and Fred took their leave.

"You will say, Merton," said Fred, as they hurried along the street, "that Bonbon is the most singular man you have been introduced to."

"I have formed great expectations from what you have told me respecting him."

After walking about ten minutes, they entered a somewhat mean and narrow street. They proceeded about half-way down it, and then knocked at a green painted door, upon which was fixed an ill-cleaned brass plate, bearing the following inscription:—"*Mon. Bonbon, Professeur de Langues.*"

The summons was answered by a somewhat dirty and slatternly woman of very sallow complexion, and who carried in her hand a greasy chamber-candlestick, in which was stuck about the half of a mould candle. This was Madame Bonbon, who not understanding English, Fred spoke to her in French.

"*Monsieur, est-il chez lui?*" he inquired.

"*Oui—certainement. Entrez—entrez, Messieurs, s'il vous plait.*"

They were shown into a small sitting-room.

"*Asseyez-vous, Messieurs.*" And Madame Bonbon hastened to communicate the arrival of the gentlemen to her husband.

The room presented a somewhat novel appearance. Two or three foils were suspended from the wall on one side, and on another were hung pictures of some of the favourite French ballet-dancers of the day. The other walls were decorated with a few French prints of an inferior description. On a couch lay an old guitar with the strings broken, and a few sheets of music; and on a small table in a corner of the room were placed a violin and bow. A few books were laid upon a table in the centre of the apartment. They consisted of "*Le Diable Boiteux,*" and some of the novels of Paul de Kock and De Balzac.

"Does Bonbon subsist entirely by teaching languages?" inquired Merton.

"No," said Fred. "He has a pupil or two in fencing and music, but he makes no effort to extend his connexions in that way, but depends chiefly upon the income he derives from giving instruction in French and Italian."

"Has he many pupils in those languages?"

"Yes, I believe a large number," replied Fred. "Besides, he visits a number of schools in the neighbourhood."

A light step was now heard in the passage, and somebody now whistling—now singing a little French ditty, and in a few minutes the room door was thrown open, and M. Bonbon presented himself.

"*Ah, mon cher ami*, Monsieur Wallford, *comment vous portez-vous? Je suis bien aise de vous voir.* How dy'e do, eh? I hope you are ver well. I'm glad to see you." And M. Bonbon shook Fred heartily by the hand.

Bonbon usually addressed his pupils in French, and afterwards repeated to them the same meaning in English. Thus in talking to them he was making them more and more acquainted with the language they were studying.

"This is a friend of mine, M. Bonbon," said Fred—"Mr. Merton. He has been kind enough to accompany me here to-night."

"Oh! indeed. How d'ye do, sare? I shall be vera proud to make your acquaintance. Any friend of Mr. Wallford will be most welcome to my heart." And M. Bonbon placed his hand upon the side of his bosom in which that sensitive part of our system is placed.

Bonbon was a little thin man, about five feet four. His features were sharp, and resembled in a great measure those of the Italian. His eyes were quick and animated, and indicative of a happy and humorous disposition. He was dressed in a parti-coloured dressing-gown, very dirty and shabby from constant wearing. It was fastened round his waist by a thick red cord, which tied in front, and from which depended two large tassels. His feet were encased in a pair of red morocco slippers, which were down at the heel, and exposed a pair of dirty stockings, which had once been white. Upon his head he wore a kind of Turkish cap of black velvet, from one side of which hung a golden lace tassel.

"*Quelles nouvelles avez vous, eh, Monsieur?*" inquired Bonbon. "What news, eh?"

"*Rien du tout*," said Fred.

"*Parbleu, rien du tout.*"

"*Non, Monsieur.*"

"*Avez-vous fait un thême?* Have you wrote de exercise, eh?"

"*Oui, Monsieur*," said Fred, drawing a small book from his pocket.

"*Très-bien*," said the little Frenchman. "*Voilà des livres*," he continued, addressing Merton. "There are books on de table. *Lisez-vous le français?*"

"*Oui, un peu*," replied Merton.

"*Ces livres ne sont pas difficiles*," said Bonbon, "de books are not difficult."

"*Très-bien—très-bien*," said Bonbon, after he had examined the exercise.

"I have prepared little translation," said Fred. "I have been so much engaged that I have had little time."

"*Parlez français, Monsieur. Dites le moi en français.*"

"*Je ne le parle pas assez bien.*"

"*Oui—certainement*," replied Bonbon. "Dat is de way to make you speak de languish; nothing but practice, Monsieur, will do it—nothing else."

"I am aware of that," said Fred; "but you must consider that I have scarcely studied the language twelve months yet."

"*C'est vrai, mais vous devriez parler en toute occasion.* You must speak whenever you can."

"No doubt it is an excellent plan."

"*On ne peut pas trop parler. Lisons—lisons,*" said the vivacious little Frenchman.

Having read the greater portion of an act from one of Racine's tragedies, Fred rose from the chair to depart.

"I hope we have not tired you, Merton?" said Fred.

"Oh! no—not in the least."

"You are vera patient, sare—vera good-natured, eh?—that's it," said Bonbon.

"I have, I believe, no greater claims to those excellent properties than many other persons."

"Ha, ha, vera few of us have them in grand abondaance."

"I am quite of that opinion."

"*C'est vrai—n'est ce pas,* Monsieur Wallford?"

"*Oui, Monsieur.*"

"I shall see you again on Thursday night, Mr. Wallford, eh?"

"Yes. *Bon-soir, bon-soir,*" said Fred, as he took leave of M. Bonbon.

"*Bon-soir, Messieurs.*"

"Well, what do do you think of him, Merton, eh?"

"He is like all his countrymen—very vivacious and very amusing."

"He is not so merry to-night as usual," said Fred. "I have seen him skip about like a dancing-girl."

"We must part here," said Merton, when they arrived at the end of the street.

"Oh! nonsense, you must go and have some supper with us."

"I did intend returning with you, but it is too late. I did not think your lesson would have occupied you so long."

"It is not late; it is scarcely ten o'clock."

"You must excuse me to-night."

Finding that Merton was determined, Fred pressed him no further. They separated. Fred hastened to rejoin his family, and his friend to think over in solitude every portion of the conversation that he had had with Kate Wallford. He was delighted with her frankness and affability, and he was more than ever buoyed up with the hope of a successful issue to his suit. What had added to his pleasure as much as anything, was the fact that she had consented to sit to him for her portrait. He sought out the canvas that night, and then retired to rest, but sleep forsook his eyes, and he could only think upon one subject.

XXIII.

MR. HORNCASTLE'S NEW RESIDENCE.

It is necessary that we should revert to Horncastle. He had promised to return on the following morning, but to the great surprise of Mrs. Wallford he did not make his appearance either on that or the following day. His well-known punctuality had only the effect of increasing the surprise at his absence. The departure of a person whose manners were so repulsive, and who had used every opportunity to render himself as

disagreeable as possible, could scarcely have awakened much regret. Indeed, if Mrs. Wallford had been assured of his personal safety, she would rather have rejoiced at the circumstance than otherwise. Actuated by the most praiseworthy motives, this lady had made various inquiries concerning him, but nobody appeared to be able to give her any information. The persons who were acquainted with his disappearance seemed to manifest such indifference as to his fate, that it was evident his absence was no great loss to society. By some it was supposed that he had been murdered, by others that he had taken to flight. Contrary to all expectation, on the morning of the third day he returned. He looked at once pale and haggard, and something appeared to have occurred which had made deep impression upon his mind.

"Why, Mr. Horncastle, is that you?" said Mrs. Wallford.

"Yes, it's me," answered the old man.

"We had almost given you up for lost," she added.

"And hoped that it might be so," added the old man, querulously.

"I hope, sir, we have more charity," was the reply.

"Bah—charity! It's a word that constantly rises to the lips but never enters the heart. There is no charity, madam, amongst mankind."

"Heaven forbid that your words should be true."

"They are true. I have experienced the truth of them a hundred—a thousand times."

"I am afraid, sir, you have been accustomed to deal with the worst specimens of mankind since you have formed so unjust and so wicked a conclusion as to the whole."

"I have closely studied them, and always found them the same—vain, selfish, and dishonourable. I have found them eager in the pursuit of wealth—eager in the pursuit of titles and honours. I have found them ready to sacrifice any friendship, any principle, for the attainment of their object. No, madam, my conclusion has neither been formed hastily nor unjustly."

"It is useless my attempting to combat your prejudices. I see they are fixed and not to be uprooted."

"I am glad you are so sensible. I hope nobody has been in my room in my absence."

"Sir, do you suppose that any of my family would take advantage of your absence, and force an entrance into your chamber? You locked the door."

"I did. I thought, however, as you had nearly given me up for lost, that you might have acted upon that impression."

"You will find you have been mistaken."

"I shall see presently." And he proceeded to his room.

The door was locked, and everything was in the room as he had left it. He was rejoiced to find it so, for it was certainly contrary to his expectation. He drew his box from under his bed, and having opened it, pulled from his bosom three bags of gold, which on the night of his departure to the Old Hall he had taken the precaution to carry with him, lest any attempt should be made in his absence to plunder him. He counted the money and then placed it in the box, which he pushed into its old place. He looked into his closet to see if there was any food left. He found two or three dry crusts of bread, which he attempted to eat, but they were too hard for his teeth.

"They must not be wasted," he muttered to himself. "No, no, they will steep."

He descended the stairs, and knocked at the door of Mrs. Wallford's sitting-room.

"Have you a little old milk?" he inquired when she came to him.

"I dare say I have; but I will give you some new."

"The old is good enough—it will be cheaper. Pour out a ha'porth into this pot, if you please."

"I will give you some new, and charge you nothing for it."

"The old will do as well. The times are very, very bad, and one must be careful."

When Mrs. Wallford handed him the milk, he said:

"There is the ha'penny."

"I will make you a present of it."

"Well, well," he said, "the next milk I buy I will pay you a penny."

He returned to his room, and put the crusts of bread amongst the milk to steep. When they did become soft, he took them out and ate them with a hearty relish. Having examined the room carefully, he undressed and retired to rest.

About this time the gentleman who was the owner of the Old Hall and the estate which had formerly been in the possession of the Mortimers, had publicly intimated his intention of disposing of them by auction. The character of the Hall shortly after he had purchased it became so bad that his family had refused to live in it. Within the last few months, however, it had grown infinitely worse, and there was no great probability that any person would ever consent to live in it again. It was therefore announced that on a certain day the estate would be sold by public auction in London.

Two or three days before the event took place, Horncastle informed Mrs. Wallford that he had business which would again compel him to absent himself for a few days. He also intimated that he hoped on his return to be able to provide himself with other accommodation. This was the most agreeable part of the announcement, and Mrs. Wallford began to look forward to the time of his final removal with the most earnest solicitude.

The estate was submitted for sale, and a purchaser found. The news that it had changed hands quickly reached Morlington, and everybody was anxious to know the name and character of the gentleman who had become its owner. Neither, however, transpired; and the only answer to endless inquiries was, that the purchaser was an old gentleman and very wealthy.

A few days after the sale of the property, Horncastle returned. He called Mrs. Wallford into his room, and said,

"I shall leave you a week to-day, madam."

"Oh, very well," she said.

"I dare say you will be glad to be rid of me."

"I do not think we suit each other very well."

"Perhaps not," said the old man—"perhaps not."

"Do you leave the neighbourhood?" she inquired.

"No, madam; henceforth the Old Hall will be my residence."

A FEW CHAPTERS ON THE WORKING CLASSES.

No. IV.—The Working Man's Enjoyment.

BY E. P. ROWSELL, ESQ.

It is a great and glorious circumstance, calculated to make our heart warm and glow with gratitude to the Author and Giver of all good, that even in the lowliest condition of life there is not simply contentment, but even enjoyment.

It is a winter afternoon, and I sit by my fireside. I loll back in my large easy-chair, and repose my feet comfortably in front of the fire, on a well-stuffed cushion. Presently I take the poker, and remorselessly batter the coals until the huge lumps all emit a sheet of flame, and there is a fierce roaring up the chimney. I cast my eyes round the room. They turn from a rich carpet to a handsome sideboard; from valuable pictures to glistening mirrors; and finally they rest upon the table, on which stands a decanter filled with fine old port wine, and a glass of ample dimensions. I take the decanter and transfer some of its contents to my glass, and sip three or four times with a very satisfied countenance. Suddenly a noise attracts me; it is rain beating against the windows. I gaze listlessly at it for a minute or so, then I finish my first glass of wine, and sinking back again in my chair, I murmur "What a wretched afternoon to be sure—thankful I am not out in it."

Now, reader, invest me for a few moments with extraordinary power of vision, and let my eye penetrate a number of intervening houses and buildings, and rest upon a family composed of a poor artisan, his wife and three children, seated at a meal which they call "tea," in the "living" room of their miserable dwelling-house in Vulture-court. The man is thin and pale, the woman is sickly, and the children would evidently be the better for purer air and ampler diet. The rain beats against the windows here, and some of it finds its way in, together with gusts of wind, which make the little muslin curtain wave about like a flag. I said the party were at "tea;" let me look at the tea-table, and examine certain articles I perceive thereon. There is a loaf of bread many days old, and such a tiny pat of yellow butter, the very sight giving me a cold shudder. Then I see a little black teapot containing a liquid, which, to call "tea," would be a disgraceful libel upon that (to me) delightful drink. All, all, is very dreary and very wretched. How dull, how very miserable, how dispirited these people must be. So poor —some of them ill, with nothing approaching to the name of a comfort about them—with many evils now, and I fear I must say, the probability of worse in store; why they must be, beyond description, cast down, and not a gleam of sunshine can be in any of their hearts.

Dear me, how we miscalculate! Under all these drawbacks and disadvantages, with all these circumstances favourable to gloom and depression, this party is positively, unequivocally, downright merry. Mirth and enjoyment actually prevail. The sickly wife is—yes she is—laughing; and the chubby boy who has just finished his scanty allowance of bread, over which a knife with some butter upon it has been simply

waved like a magic wand, while hungry still, in addition to being cold and wet (having been out for hours in the rain, delivering newspapers), is laughing too, while a sympathetic smile is upon the faces of all the others, including even the child who is sickening with the measles. Now what *can* they have to laugh at? Why do not they sit moaning over their hard fate—they are in poverty, bitter poverty; some of them are sickly, their burdens are likely to increase—not diminish; they believe themselves they will end their days in a workhouse—and therefore, I repeat, *why* do they not sob and pine, and unceasingly grumble and complain? God be thanked! although it may be a mystery to me, the fact is so that they do nothing of the kind; that they neither weep nor droop, nor look melancholy, nor feel so, nor murmur, nor wonder that they have not only no luxuries, but that they can hardly live from day to day. God be praised that sunshine finds its way even into the hearts of people who work hard twelve hours a day every day, excepting Sunday, throughout the year; who live in wretched houses in wretched courts, and who eat and drink just sufficient to support life and no more. Do I suppose, narrow-minded being as I am, that happiness (for I am happy, too, who am in very different circumstances) resides in a bottle of old port, or in a well-carpeted room? Here is an answer to me. I may hug myself in my luxury, and there is no reason why I should not enjoy it to the fullest extent; but gratification may be where *my* sources of pleasure exist not in the smallest degree, and where there is the absence of all which makes my heart glow within me.

Yes, the working man has his enjoyment, his sources of gratification, equally with the rich. It may, and at first sight it *does*, seem strange; but such is the fact. I have often stood before some miserable little hut in an agricultural district, and been lost in amazement. This hut, perhaps, has had two rooms, and *such* rooms! Incredibly small, low-pitched, suffocating-looking apartments, with brick floors and tiny windows; the being in them for ten minutes was positive torture. Yet in these rooms lived some four or five people: a man and his wife and two or three children. They all subsisted on the man's earnings, which may have been about fifteen shillings a week. During the winter time, and when any of them were ill, they were assisted by benevolent individuals, and, except under extraordinary pressure, never received help from the parish. Now one is tempted to ask where could be the charms of existence in such a case as this? Consider the life of the man. He rises at from four to six o'clock in the morning, he works the whole day, he lives on the commonest food, and with it all he can but just avoid availing himself of parochial relief as a practice; while, looking on a few years, he *can* expect nothing but the filling a pauper's grave. Now what is it makes this man's heart light and sunshiny? Why is he never sad, but hearty and happy, as though the present were crowded with enjoyments, and not a cloud bedimmed the future? We say again—even taking every circumstance into account—the matter is a mystery to us, and while we are thankful we still wonder. One thing is, that we can see the difficulty of even conceiving ourselves in the position of one of these men. There is an intense quietude in their lives which we cannot realise by any means sufficiently. You can hardly imagine your-

self, reader, filling the utterly insignificant position of a lower class agricultural labourer. Try to suppose that you can read and write only after such a fashion that a shade lower and you could do neither—that except as regards hoeing turnips and the like matters, you are absolutely dismally ignorant; that your reasoning powers would not bear you out for one half minute upon the most trifling subject; that, in point of fact, it would need a little consideration to say wherein you are superior to the horses you drive in the huge waggon—try and suppose this; but you cannot, you will break down. I have made the attempt often, reader, and failed, and you will do the same.

But now behold even a greater mystery than that this lowly individual should presume to be happy.

There may come to me a very different day to that which now I know. When the shades of evening—the long shadows of old age—shall be falling on my path, the gloom may be unnaturally and unexpectedly increased by the darker shadows of misfortune and distress. It is hard—it sorely saddens us—to feel the limbs weaken and the senses fade; and if to these sources of sorrow other and unanticipated reasons of depression arise, the spirit may well quail and the head and heart bow down together. Take away all my comforts, not simply my luxurious living, but those higher enjoyments—those rich intellectual pleasures, which now I have the means perpetually to grasp and indulge in to the full—make my existence one dreary round of toil—harsh, irksome toil—unrelieved by any of my present gratifications, and oh! how shall I be stricken down, and how bitterly will my spirit be laid in the dust!

Yes, true, *for a time*—only for a time; for even as the lowly labourer envies not my lofty pleasures, because he has never known and could not appreciate them, so, when some time I had been separated from them, had in a degree forgotten them, and had come to recognise and accommodate myself to a mode of life into which they could never enter, my bitter feeling would subside, and the minor and meaner gratifications, which would then be open to me, would be regarded with as much fondness as were the brighter and more exalted, which would be passed away. Slowly it might be, but certainly I should come to survey the change with contentment. Speak of it as possible now, and I shrink back with horror; but so it would be then. When it came, my strength would be equal to my day, and instead of being prostrated in the dust I should stand, humbled truly, but still erect.

So it is, that turn our eyes where we will we find that marvellous accommodation to circumstances which, perhaps, more than anything in this globe beside, makes our heart glow with thankfulness to the Almighty Father. Take away this merciful ordainment, and what a scene of contest and bitterness—what unmeasured wretchedness would ensue. Suppose the myriads, who now deem the highest enjoyment a pint of porter and a pipe outside a public-house door, suddenly regarded these sources of happiness much as they would be contemplated by the wealthy merchant or haughty noble. Think of the vehement rush, the turbulent scramble, the sanguinary struggle, which in every quarter would be the consequence, for the luxuries which now only a few possess, and which, actually, only a few care for. In an instant the world

would be like the abode of demons, bent on one another's destruction; and the yells of fierce and bloody hate would only be silenced when that destruction should have been accomplished.

God be thanked then, we repeat, that the pale-cheeked artisan in Vulture-court can be cheerful and lighthearted, despite his causes of sorrow and the absence of tangible sources of gratification. God be thanked that the very humble agricultural labourer, who is so ignorant, so excluded from the bright intellectual world, who, in a sense, it must be confessed, is of such trifling value in creation, can yet delight in existence, and be thankful for its gift. Undoubtedly these things are not calculated to increase our pride, but they are glorious subjects of contemplation for all that. They make us feel that the broad heavens above us are not so ample as our Father's love—a love which provides that we shall have peace in this earthly existence, and which promises never-ending enjoyment when "time shall be no longer."

A FEW WORDS ABOUT FALLING IN LOVE.

BY JOHN NAULE ALLEN.

Captain Absolute. By Heavens, I shall forswear your company! You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover! Do love like a man.—*The Rivals.*

Notre vie est une maison,
Y mettre le feu c'est folie.—NIVERNAIS.

EXETER-HALL preachers are pretty well agreed that the world we live in is a miserable one—so agreed are melancholy rhymesters—so are old women generally. Believe them, there is little goodness in the heart, little warmth in the sun; and the beauty which some people pretend to see in flowers and smiles must be a mistake altogether, oh man! —a mistake altogether. Childhood has its broken toys; old age has its gout and rheumatism; and every other age has its bumps, and jolts, and peculiar ill-usage—nothing else, in fact; and so wags the world, without joking. But not alone in this belief stand the ministers of Exeter Hall, poetasters whose temperament is melancholy, or the other good people just referred to generally. Man is proud of his misfortunes, and believes in them: credulous as—woman; only he is rather too apt in his own affairs to see a cloud where others see the sun, and to place the wrong end of his telescope of life—if there are such things as telescopes of life—to his eye, rather than the right end.

Man's time is consumed in struggling after happiness, and boasting, rather than complaining, of wretchedness.

Happiness is like the fool's cap: whoever manages to win it, is ashamed to be seen wearing it, if he knows it.

Men do with felicity what the clown in the pantomime does with the precious child—make great things of it while alone, but the moment their friends appear—in the shape of policemen or otherwise—place it

behind them, or somewhere out of sight, and know nothing at all about it.

Some one has had a fortune left—it is told briefly. Somebody has lost one—it is described at length. Half a dozen words suffice to speak of the one occurrence. Half a dozen volumes leave the story of the other unfinished. We scorn delights as far as our breath goes, and live laborious days in telling of it. One-half of us make ourselves unhappy, and the other half of us wish to be thought so—we are so conceited, we are.

Ruminations like these lead us to philosophy, philosophy to Lord Bacon, Lord Bacon to an essay he wrote on love, the latter production to the fact that he lost a wife and a fortune by writing it, and so we come to be warned not to let our pen run too glibly or imprudently over the stock of foolscap that lies on our table, for fear of consequences. For we are going to write of love—or, at least, about falling in love. That is how we came to write so much just now of misery. Everybody knows the analogy the latter bears towards the tender passion. Some people talk about the cup of misery and about the cup of love, making two cups of it; but a friend of ours is more rational, and talks about *the* cup of half-and-half. "Oh, this love!" said this friend to us the other day (he is of a rather ingenious turn of mind); "it is a compositor, and sets 'wretchedness, surliness, and ill-humour' in italics, 'suicide' in large capitals, and 'bliss' in a parenthesis; and the italics cling ever to me, the capitals are always before me, and the word in the parenthesis is so parenthetical that I cannot read it, believe me."

Every man who has eyes and a bachelor's estate, who is neither an oyster nor a general philanthropist (who have not time for that sort of thing), nor yet properly "engaged," and who moreover is between the ages of nineteen and twenty-seven, falls in love, by a moderate computation, twelve times in each mortal year, and each time with a different object. If there is an exception in existence, besides those just named, such exception deserves to undergo at the hands of modern young ladies the punishment that Orpheus received at the hands of the Thracian women. Such cold, heartless stoicism ought not to be tolerated. We only bargain for twelve a year. And yet at first sight, and especially to hysterical-female eyes, the number may seem large, man a monster, and the individual who writes these lines a little Machiavelli; but with a little sal volatile in the shape of reason, we may bring the lady round, and make things appear square to her. The number is small enough in all conscience. Think of the number of angels an ordinary man must have seen and spoken to in the course of a month—find that out of the number he has fallen in love with only one, and then, my dear madam, freeze him with your own coldness for his neglect and contempt of the sex.

And yet—for there is quite as much virtue in "and yet" as there is in your "if"—if people cannot fall in love, as to all human appearance they cannot, without being rendered insufferably wretched, we would add no increase to the modest number. We speak of people falling in love—which is done by their putting their foot in it in the first instance—before they have told their love, and, it may be, before they are acquainted even with the Christian name of the idol. For when a pair come to have

confessed each other, and to be regularly "engaged," romance gives way to common-place, poetry to arithmetic, and love in a cottage to "£——— a year—could we keep a carriage out of it?"

Before a gentleman has obtained *her* papa's consent, and when he is inclined to think he will not obtain it, he feels like a hero, ready to do anything "like a lovier so brave"—to swallow cold pison, like the celebrated Villikins mentioned in ancient history, or to work his way through mountains of granite with a stone-breaker's hammer, *à la* David Copperfield. But the consent obtained of papa and mamma and Lucretia Matilda, he soon learns to stand stiff on his dignity—an uncomfortable way of standing on an uncomfortable substance—and to take his place among that class of individuals whose elegant motto is "I'm as good as you." Nay, he very likely goes so far as to ask himself, might he not have done better?—has he not thrown himself away?—and ought not Lucretia Matilda to manifest her consciousness of his condescen—— indeed, all cause for excitement gone, he becomes so mopish, and, in all probability, so does "she," that they both ought to thank themselves there are such things as lovers' quarrels in the world to relieve the humdrum jog-trottery of courtship.

Seldom does a man (of the right sort) fall in love with a woman (girl or lady—as you like) that he has been in the habit of meeting and chatting and being upon terms of intimacy with—such a one seems too much like his sisters. This is very natural. He falls in love with one he never saw before—his ignorance of her throws new beauty round her—how can he say whether she has just dropped down from heaven or not?—whether she speaks the language of men or gods? He sees all her beauty, grace, and loveliness—none of her faults appear, and he is not the man, in such a case, to see through a milestone. And so he loves; and if they become better acquainted, she, knowing his passion, shows all her gold and none of the dross, and still he loves. But of one whom he has often met, neither of them suspecting a tenderness, he knows the faults—therefore it is he falls in love with a stranger—at a ball, say. He gets introduced to Miss Ladanse, walks through a set of quadrilles with her, and accompanies her down to supper. He pulls cracker bon-bons, and says smart things to his own infinite delight, and, it is to be wished, to hers also. Afterwards he takes the liberty—for he is not shy—to assist her with her shawl and to see her to her carriage, and, assisted by the street-lamp, imagines her heavenly eye expresses tenderness for him as she takes her seat. Just then the surly coachman lashes the horses, the lover finds that he has neglected to inquire where she lives or when he may see her again, and, turning the corner of the street the carriage looks as though it were driving to the planet Saturn. Then a dead weight sinks upon his heart, and rushing back into the house, he seizes the best hat he comes at and goes home to his bed. Shall we pry further, and see him in the fulness of his agony? Behold his game at pitch and toss—his pitching into the cruel Fates with his tongue, and his tossing himself wildly about! Is she thinking of him? Has she a lover already? Has he made an impression? And—oh, wretch that he is!—he cannot remember distinctly what she was like. A moment, and she stands before him in all her loveliness, and then runs away like a will-o'-the-wisp, and then comes back with no feature but a nose, and again is

all mouth, and lastly—oh horrible!—is all teeth, which *will* chatter and grin. And then comes sleep, and the curtain rises on a little foal of the nightmare. And with the morning opens a seeming life of misery upon a wretched man—the life that lasts a month, but which bears the mark "da capo," with variations.

Bring the Betsies, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care.

It was Dr. Johnson who made the mistake to write these lines; and they form a remarkable instance of the folly of writing about what one doesn't understand. Instead of banishing, these Betsies, Kates, and Jennies are the cause of greatest care. The man who has not undergone sleepless nights and experienced wretchedness immeasurable, and all for love, we would despise; we would look upon him as a Peace Society man, whose god was £ *s. d.*, and whose only crosses in the school of adversity had regard to the unpaid accounts he had been compelled to cross out of his ledger.

Now it is essential that the man just fallen in love should be waspish as Shakspeare's *Apemantus*, and buzz about the ears of quiet honest people—stinging where he can. The new lover that is only melancholy only thinks himself in love. Show us one that is inclined to be lively and hopeful, and we cry "Turn him out for an impostor." Before one convinces us that there is anything approaching to genuineness in him, we shall want to see him rob the dog of his dinner and give it to the cat, and afterwards beat the cat for having eaten it; we shall want to see him fiendishly sulky with his mother at dinner-time, and grin savagely at his father when his face is turned towards the mulligatawny. He must wish, and evince that he wishes, that the faithful domestic who offers him bread with good intentions would go direct to a place which is said to be paved with the latter. He must call his own young brother an ass, and accuse his sisters of vulgarity, and then we may allow that he has really fallen in love.

For it is wonderful how positively refined one has become by morning when one has fallen in love overnight; what a sensitiveness has crept all over; how the rough edge has got ground down, and all become keen and sharp from the tongue to the heels of one's boots, we may say, where the gunpowder ran out of Foote's gentleman! Send not a man to Court or to France for refinement, unless, indeed, it be to the Court of Love, or unless he have a keen eye for French charms. Let him fall in love. And then, in the first place, he will become too refined to eat. Bread will become insipid and "choky," fish repulsive, and flesh perfectly sensual. The whole of his household, as they sit at table enjoying, as usual, their quiet innocent meals, become converted into cannibals in his refined estimation, and the honest servant who has served the family respectably for years, stands before him, or behind him, a jackal. What vulgar creatures his sisters appear—compared with *her!* what an unenlightened man his father compared with what her father must be! what a difference between his mother and hers!—especially at dinner-time. Most antagonistic are food and love. A man's bosom is not capacious enough to hold the two—nor woman's neither. This is doubtless the reason why couples when loving feel confident in the happiness of a

cottage, and the possibility of living almost entirely upon love. And if marriage had not the effect of cooling love, diminishing poetry, and increasing the appetite, love in a cottage, and "airy" dinners (unlike those of policemen bearing a similar adjective) might be very satisfactory. But we do not desire to pursue this portion of our subject too far, for, doing so, knowing the readiness of parties to "turn a penny" in any possible manner, we might induce some lodging-house keeper to issue an advertisement headed "Board and Lodging for Young Men in Love." And such a one would be a very profitable establishment if well patronised.

And then, again, refinement is not confined to the dinner-table, but generates in the lover, and comes out all over him like pins and needles, in the shape of general ill-humour and fastidiousness. He will bite everything that touches him, like a mad dog, and he will touch everything he comes near for the sake of an opportunity to bite. He has become, as though by enchantment, a connoisseur surrounded by vulgarity. His dearest friends become bores; noise irritates him, and quiet drives him wild. He awakes one morning and finds himself—ah, a sort of—ah—he don't know what; but he could best express himself, only the look of the thing restrains him, by dashing his hat to the ground every five minutes. He is the man who has just fallen in love. He grows thinner every hour; everybody who speaks to him takes a liberty; he can't work, he can't read; he can do nothing but fret, and fret, and fret, as the seaman's wife—the witch's friend who was not liberal with the chesnuts—munched, and munched, and munched. Above all, the old fat cook, with whom he has been upon the best of terms for years, and whom he has admired in a certain way always, becomes an eyesore to him. He gets to comparing her waist, which measures yards, with *hers* which might be spanned; and he hates to see anything so much opposed to her. And perhaps he is excusable in this. We have already named his frugal habits as regards food—his frugality may extend to some other things, and in the present case, whilst one is loveable as the waist of an angel, the other must be highly objectionable to all true economists as being a waist of Time.

Cupid ought to be known as the patron saint of tailors, for the child is their very best friend. He shoots his arrow into the heart, and the unfortunate shoots himself into the tailor's shop. And the best of it, is the lover will pay—he will be thus proper, for fear his debts should come to Lucretia Matilda's ears, and she might think he was poor. So Cupid is a jealous beak, who orders the discharge of all bills. Yesterday Jykes was heart-whole and negligent of his dress—to-day he is a lover; and oh! a tremendous swell. He has found out all of a sudden that his trousers' knees are baggy; and his cravat is brown with the sun, and his gloves are quite shabby, and his waistcoat, and his coat, and his hat, unfit for a beggar to go out in. And now he gets lavender-coloured gloves that really fit like gloves, and boots that are only two sizes too small for him, and an unapproachable hat, and a ditto *et cetera, et cetera*,—as we said, a tremendous swell. All literature has become distasteful to him, but the literature of fashion—all art a bore, except the art of dress. He dresses to within an inch of his life as they say, and falls into a rapid

consumption—of time and money—the former of which he spends before his glass (looking-glass, tumbler-glass, and wine-glass, by turns), and the latter at the tailor's. And he begins to look so pale and ghostly, that as he sits taking his glass the dread thought must strike the beholder that the spirits he imbibes immediately become embodied spirits. But it is in vain to bid him cease. He will have his dress and his glass—the newly-made lover will—even though to obtain them he should be constrained to haunt his uncle—and all in the way of refinement.

But although, with the above exception, all literature becomes a bore, this does not prevent his dabbling in novels—and cursing their authors. He wants a plot, and he wants sentiment to suit his own case, and, for his life, he can find neither the one nor the other. Every case is different to his own case, every hero unlike himself, and every heroine no more like *her* than Rosemary-lane is like Mayfair. Why the deuce are there so many lords and countesses about, and what are so many fathers and mothers, and grandmothers, and uncles, and aunts, doing upon the canvas? He has neither committed, nor is he at all suspected of, murder; and her father was neither transported nor hanged; nor is the latter a great gambler; nor does he desire to marry his daughter to the son of a great money-lender—as far as the lover knows. Why do not the authors write true to life, and show how Alfred fell in love with Mary in the dance, whether at Almack's, or the Argyll Rooms, or at Mrs. Smith's; how he pined in solitude, smoking cigars and imbibing brown stout—which made him look pale; how she, like Billy Taylor's captain, came for to hear on't, and how they were soon made happy as doves in a cage? When an aristocratic young lady is about to be led to the hymeneal altar she is always the beautiful and accomplished daughter of somebody or other—when a mechanics' institution holds its annual *soirée*, and gives somniverous speakers an opportunity to open out, the affair always goes off with *éclat*—when a critic is pleased with a book, he always avows that no library should be without it; yet all these are but half conventionalisms compared with the iron rule that authors have of mixing up in their novels, as in a diabolical cauldron, all manner of ghosts and money-lenders, poison, and "I forbid the banns;" poor young hero and rich young heroine; beastly old uncle and kind-hearted useful old nurse, who is of opinion that the said uncle "ought to be ashamed of hisself, mum; for when your dear father, which I used to nuss, was alive," *et cetera*. Indeed our writers will not write to suit true love cases; they will not daguerreotype our true lover's love, and speak rationally of a dance and a smitten heart; of food becoming distasteful, and grog and cigars dearer than ever; of the temper growing cranky and misanthropical; indeed, of nothing true, of nothing sentimental. Wherefore we ought not to be surprised that our lover, wearied with vain researches, should pitch the novels into a corner, and seizing his hat, and his gloves, and his heaviest walking-stick—for the purpose of demolishing that large portion of the world which he feels will oppose his progress—start for the theatre, to see if there be soothing medicine offered there for sale.

But there it's quite as bad—the plot outlandish, and the characters unearthly; or there is some confounded comedy whose object is to make love look ridiculous; and the man in the blue coat and the red-and-white-

striped trousers worships his idol in such a fashion that the theatre actually roars again, not thinking of the possibility of there being one in the pit—one whose transcendent feelings are embued with the sublime—who is chafing himself to death at this insult offered to the divine, and who is so inclined towards tragedy that he could find of his heart to send all the people in the playhouse weeping to their beds, to beggar the management, and rob every actor of his engagement, without any hope of ever obtaining another. For, as Mr. Guppy says, there *are* chords in the human heart which—— So neither our novelists nor our dramatists write true to the life, and our lover must have truth. On his way home from the theatre it is customary with him, we are given to understand, to call at the Blue Boar or the White Lion, and partake of brandy-and-water; and this, we are told, sometimes causes him to dream when he has got to bed. Moreover, it is said he has been known to dream he had got his angel in his arms—awaking to find he had only got the bolster there. But even in his drinking he cannot be happy, but must complain, and almost weep because he has not got a congenial companion—Lord Byron—to drink with him.

He torments himself by picturing Lucretia Matilda enjoying herself. The thought renders him miserable. Could he really see her in his mind's eye thinking of him—misanthropically avoiding her father—telling her mother she wouldn't for her—and feeling a strong desire to pitch the old piano out of window—then, then he could be happy.

He inclines to St. James's Park, and to leaning there with his head and half his body over the rails, steadily and intensely regarding the ornamental water; also to wearing his neck very bare, and to gnawing the head of his walking-stick.

He cuts all his acquaintances short; and to his most intimate friend Brown, who addresses him "Dear Jack," inviting him to a convivial party, he returns for answer,

"Dear Sir,—

"Can't come. Yours, &c.

"J. Jykes."

This at any rate if he be a refined lover; for there be of lovers who fall in love, and propose, and get married, as quietly and respectably as other men get up and dress and go to "the office"—men, sir, who would contemptuously take snuff if you attempted to read Byron to them, who would propose *en déshabille*, and marry in an old hat, and know how Lucretia Matilda's parents were situated at the banker's before they did either.

But while young men continue to fall in love, and whilst maidens do not immediately set their minds at rest, so long will there be young misanthropes and dull companions amongst us.

ARE YOU A CONNOISSEUR?

BY WYNN W. R. WILLIAMS, M.A.

FORMING a staff of taste, *attachés* to the army of the arts and sciences, and upon their own terms students of good living, what pleasant curiosities of literature are folks called Connoisseurs! They pack themselves up into an enlightened jury upon all matters requiring discernment, and they disagree upon their verdicts with as much opinionated obstinacy as the best of them. A coin as superficial as a policeman's button, and a trifle beneath the current value of a brass farthing, will meet from a connoisseur respect proportionate to its wrecked condition and the difficulty he has had in obtaining it. He does not take it from you and bend it savagely with his teeth, after the uncivil manner of a cabman who would point you out as the "party as huttered the base coin and tried to force a pewter bob on him;" nor does he ring it on his thumb and impale it upon the counter, like a mercenary tradesman, or a knight of old when he stuck his sword through the shield of your great-great-great-grandpapa, thereby insinuating that it was not of the regulation pattern; but he takes your money thankfully, and the dirtier it is the more thankfully does he take it, and when it is nestled in a little green-baized receptacle, something like the cover of a pill-box, he peers at it through glasses of such historic power and persuasion, that he can behold the "little tin" through just as many centuries of the world's age as he thinks proper. Charles I., I am sure, he'll tell you, pleased as if he was greeting a veritable man of metal. No, it is the Second Charles, with a Hume-and-Smollet look upon his face. No, it is William the Conqueror, giving himself the lie direct, for I see his red hair. Where did you obtain this interesting reminiscence of one of the greatest men this country ever produced? If you were to confess your joke to the intelligent Popcroft, and inform him that it is simply a bullet which had travelled through a man and had been picked out flattened from the walls of an Irish penitentiary, and that if he was staring at anybody's image, it must be that of Pat Murphy, the murderer, one of the *greatest gintleman rebels that* country ever produced, he would laugh at you incredulously. And then our friend in the threadbare coat and bile in his eye, he is a connoisseur, and a warning to all connoisseurs in "litigation;" he knows all the leading counsel of the day, the most gifted conveyancers, the most ingenious attorneys, and if he had the means left the playful fellow would *run any one of* them against his best friend; he has few now, he always looks hungry. His face is the colour of an old deed, and you meet him prowling about the purlieus of the law courts; he remarks, in a feverish, husky voice, what a promising young lawyer Mr. Grinder is, how he took a double first at Oxford, and that if he had a better manner he might aspire to the woolsack. And then he touches upon domestic life, and will tell you how he trounced his younger brother, the litigious scoundrel, in the celebrated cause Penates *v.* Penates, what much better men he had than John, and will talk so much about retainers, and leaders, and fees, that you fancy his words will come out of his mouth strung into sentences with *bonâ-fide* red-tape; and when he has tried a feeble joke about the Emperor of

Russia being a pettifogging fellow, and wants to make his court a court of chancery and throw the world in, and that Serjeant Reason will not hear a word about *nisi*, he gets bewitchingly confident, borrows five shillings, and hopes to see you soon again. And then as to picture connoisseurs, what a mighty schoolmaster is the Duke of Nonsuch, with copies neatly executed in German, French, and Italian! he is a connoisseur; so is the steady young man from Sparkes and Co., who opens his mouth in undisguised admiration about "hart and hart unions," and will expatiate upon the merits of a humble representation of a London square floating upon a river of ditch-water, and which the young man from Sparkes and Co. calls his "Connylotty."

I was a boy at home for the holidays when I was first made sensible of the existence of the last-named description of connoisseur. An uncle often made me a companion of his walks. I was a dutiful nephew, and remember well toddling by his side to some street in the neighbourhood of Fitzroy-square. We stopped at a house, the door of which was opened by a gentleman in a long brown coat—a tall, sickly gentleman he was, with a black satin stock, no shirt-collar, and a black satin waistcoat—at least, it looked as greasy as satin, and he was eating at the end of a sausage which he held in his hand. He smiled blandly at my uncle, and we followed him up-stairs into a very small back room. I could not help associating that room with the sausage he was eating. It had a very soft carpet, and close to the window was a large frame of some sort or other covered with green-baize. A few whispers were exchanged between my uncle and the snuffy-coated gentleman relative to the light. My cap was plucked off my head, I was pushed into a corner near the terrible green frame, dragged out, thrust into another, and notwithstanding I had not moved a muscle of my face, told to remain quiet. I wrapped my cloak around so as not to touch the walls of this torture chamber, and with my mouth open, and my eyes fixed upon the green frame, awaited the issue of events. My uncle posted himself in front, and the gentleman in brown, as tenderly as if he was lifting up the veil of a beautiful lady, gathered up the green-baize curtain, recovered himself, and took a pinch of snuff. It was certainly a most beautiful picture, and a landscape. We all three looked intently at the scene. My uncle preserved his equanimity admirably. "I call that very foine," the brown gentleman whispered, in voice so low that if the coloured and brilliant creation he praised had been one of my favourite soap-bubbles no evil would have resulted; "painted in his best manner," he continued, pensively; "it is in perfect keeping." Strange if it was not, I thought. I wonder if he feeds it with sausages? My uncle nodded assent, and at length said, huskily, "What is the price?"—"Twelve hundred pounds," replied his friend; "bought yesterday by Lord Nonsuch," and gloomily added, as if he was reading an epitaph, "Salvator Rosa." Little did I think that the real artist was a black-eyed young Venetian living gloriously upon the few pounds that sickly brown man had paid him for his work. They both continued staring as if for a wager in that close soft room. My uncle's friend took out a hard biscuit and commenced eating it. I could almost hear the crumbs as they found their way down his throat; it was done, no doubt, to keep up appearances, but I shall never forget how the first bite jarred on my nerves—from very nervousness my

became uncomfortable, and I would have given up a stick of liquo-
piece of new whipcord, and all the marbles I had in my pocket to
rubbed it; but how dare I presume upon such an insult to Nature
such trees, such rocks, and waterfalls, with two savage figures in
reground armed with knives, and evidently intent upon making a
ge and biscuit pic-nic of the next travellers that might dare to look
their particular picture! My two living friends, however, got bolder,
ncle especially so; he went, indeed, so close that he could have kissed
icture; then he started back, and then close again, with one hand to
l his eyes, just as if he intended to box Salvator Rosa for twelve
nd pounds and went in to win. "Very foine," he continued say-
"very foine indeed." The brown individual then dropped the
-baize, and nimbly taking up a small picture, exclaimed, quite in a
nt voice, "Now, I call that a foine bit of Teniers."—"Yes," my
replied. "What do you think of that, Toby, my boy?" I rubbed
se,—came from the corner, and looked at the new wonder. There
red to be half a dozen ill-looking fellows drinking liquorice-water
f big mugs, but I said, shading my eyes, after the manner of my
, and huskily too: "Very foine—very foine indeed!—What's the
?" They both laughed heartily, evidently pleased with my civility;
an in brown saying, "Yes, he has an eye for art; he will be a
isseur." And my good uncle, correcting him with "No, no, Toby;
uires a longer head and a longer pocket than you possess to be a
isseur, so come away;" and out into the street we sallied.

e fair sex have also their connoisseurs. Miss Popcroft—her age is a
r of conjecture, but to look at her for a second you would not fail
cognise the appearance of a lady of very considerable experience.
oves old china; but, more correctly speaking, she is a connoisseur
Curates," and she hates them, club-nosed, with a mouth like a child's
cradle; she is, and always was, ugly to a fault. When a middle-
woman, she was unfortunate in a gentle attachment to a curate;
d not like her, and she has hated his race ever since—she is ready to
them all. She only saw one perfect curate in her life, and any
has always something deficient—his voice, appearance, or doctrine,
ure to suffer from her critical vengeance. She is, of course, a
ar attendant at church, and, with the exception of the time when
anns are published, a period when the grumpy old vestal looks
fully around upon the congregation, she never abstracts her gaze
the victim in the pulpit. She comes of a family of connoisseurs—
rother is the mild, spectacled, coin-scraping Popcroft; and she has
er brother, the thirsty Squire Popcroft, who, when his health does
quire him to be sewn up in wet linen, or cooked and stewed like
souchet, will tell you the years of each bottle of wine in your cellar
as much faith and devotion as the monks of old told their beads.
such doctrine, gentle reader, humbly offered, can you inform me,
ou, too, upon their committee?—are you a Connoisseur?

THE WAYS OF PROVIDENCE.

THERE was once a hermit who lived in the deep recess of a forest. Some bitter grief had induced him, while he was still young, to seek seclusion from the world in this dreary solitude. He had built himself a small hut of wood, and with his goats and the wild fruits of the forest he barely managed to maintain existence.

He had thus passed many years, when one day, as he was thinking over the scenes of his past life, some doubts arose in his mind concerning the justice of God. He therefore resolved to go forth once more into the world, in order to gain further knowledge which might enlighten him.

The hermit arose and set out upon his travels. He had not proceeded far when he was accosted by a youth of a fair and gentle countenance, who, on being told of the hermit's object, offered to accompany him on his journey, since his road lay in the same direction. That night they came to a stately and magnificent castle, where they were graciously received and hospitably entertained. The following morning they took leave of their kind host and proceeded on their journey.

"Ah!" said the hermit, "in this instance I must confess that justice seems to have been wisely dispensed, since the good things of this world could not have been better bestowed than on one so kind and benevolent as our good host. May God bless and prosper him to the end of his days."

But the youth was silent.

They travelled on till nightfall, when they came to a miserable cottage, where they knocked and begged for shelter. It was a wretched hovel; the roof was partly falling in, and cobwebs hung like draperies around the walls. This comfortless abode was occupied by a feeble, emaciated old man, who was seated on a large oaken chest bound with bands of iron, the key of which he wore around his neck.

"Why do you ask for shelter at a poor place like this?" said the miser, for such he was. "I have but a little straw on which to rest my aching limbs, and a morsel of black bread and water is all that has ever passed my lips for many a day. Come not to me, then, for shelter and entertainment—this poor hut is unable to afford it."

"But no other human dwelling is near," urged the youth; "the wind howls wild and fierce, and heavy clouds are gathering over our heads threatening to discharge their fury upon us. For pity's sake permit us to take shelter under your roof. This is all we ask."

The miser then reluctantly unfastened the door and admitted them. The old man spread some straw for his guests in the only corner where the rain did not pour through the roof, and again seating himself on his chest, he remained awake all night that he might keep a watch over his unwelcome visitors.

At dawn of day the hermit and his companion arose to depart, but to the surprise and dismay of the hermit, on taking leave of their host the youth produced from under his cloak a golden goblet, which he had taken from the castle, and presented it to the miser, who received it with brightening eyes and a grim smile of satisfaction.

"Well," thought the hermit, "this is a strange youth; but I will not part from him just yet"—for his wonder and curiosity was aroused by such an unaccountable proceeding."

The next day was very hot, the travellers grew faint and weary; so they entered a poor, though neat and pretty cottage, and asked for a drink of water. The inmates of the cottage consisted of a feeble old couple, their widowed daughter, and a little grandson. The daughter seemed worn by anxiety and fatigue; since, with all her industry and care, she could scarcely earn enough to support them all, as her old parents were entirely dependent upon her. However, what with the extreme cleanliness, neat little garden, and gay flowers which adorned each casement, the place looked most comfortable and cheerful.

At the approach of the hermit and his companion the young woman smilingly bade them welcome, and invited them to share their frugal evening repast. It merely consisted of bread, milk, and a few radishes. After this simple meal they all knelt down, whilst the old man pronounced a short, simple, but fervent prayer for the blessing and assistance of the Almighty. The old couple and the child then retired to rest, but the daughter took down her spinning-wheel and began working with great industry. The hermit and the youth then arose and took leave of their poor but hospitable hostess.

The youth carried a torch which he had just lighted at the cottage fire. They had hardly proceeded a few steps, when the youth turned back and set fire to the straw thatch of the cottage. The wind being strong and the thatch dry the cottage was soon in flames, nothing being saved but the lives of the inmates. The hermit was so horror-struck and afraid that he durst not venture any remark on the conduct of his strange companion, but continued his journey in silence, ever and anon gazing at the youth with a mingled feeling of awe and wonder. That same night they passed a hut among the mountains, from whence sounds of lamentation and a bitter cry was heard. They entered and found a mother weeping over her only child, whilst the father was bending over him with a countenance in which was expressed the most intense grief. As the travellers entered, the parents of the child looked up and cried: "Oh, pray for us, Holy Father, that our child may be spared." Thereupon the hermit knelt down to pray; but the youth took a cup and prepared a draught, which he administered to the sick child; and the child immediately expired. The remainder of that night they stayed at the hut, and next morning the youth engaged the father as their guide over the mountains.

This time the hermit hesitated to go with his companion any further, but somehow an irresistible impulse urged him to follow the mysterious youth. They had travelled some way over the steep rocky paths of the mountains, when they came to a slight bridge of planks thrown over an abyss. On passing over this, the youth pushed his guide and hurled him headlong into the yawning gulf.

"Wretch!" cried the hermit, who could no longer control his feelings, and was springing towards him with uplifted arm; but just as he was on the point of seizing him, a bright cloud enveloped the youth, and a dazzling radiance shone around him; for, lo! the archangel Michael arose on the cloud before him. Then the angel spake, saying:

"Thou didst doubt the justice of God and now thou hast seen it. The goblet which I took from the castle was poisoned, and therein will the miser find his due reward. The good people whose cottage I burnt down will find a treasure which hath long been buried under its founda-

tion; and the child whom I poisoned would have grown up a murderer and a robber like his father, whom I threw into the abyss as a just reward for his iniquities."

The hermit, who had fallen on his face, now looked up, but the archangel had disappeared.

Healed of all his doubts, the hermit returned to his silent retreat in the forest glades, where he passed the remainder of his days in humble meditation on the wonderful and mysterious ways of God.

THE ALHAMBRA.

BY DR. SCOFFERN.

THERE in a sea of glory sets the sun
Behind yon snow-capp'd mountain in the West,
Greeting the golden Darro with his beams
Ere yet he sinks to rest.
Farewell, bright orb, farewell!
I love thee not when lighting up yon towers,
And gleaming bright o'er spire and mirador:
Thou showest the desolation Time hath made,
And how the Moslem fell
In days of yore!

I love to gaze upon yon Arab fane
When the pale moon sheds down her silver light
All trembling midst the shadows—spectre-like,
And dim and dreamy as the memory
Of times long past—when turban'd Saracen
Roamed in yon azure halls, or, rushing by,
Hail'd belted knight!

I love, Alhambra, in the midnight hour
To seek thy marble courts, when all is still
Save the low murmuring voice of waters springing
From sculptured fount in many a silver rill,
Bathing the roses as they onward flow
O'er the scarp'd rock into the vale below,
Where Darro weds Genil:—
And the sweet nightingale, with plaintive lay,
Warbles amidst the myrtles all alone,
Like some fond minstrel singing of the dead
And deeds of valour done,
And times long passed away,
And beauty fled!

Then, as by wizard's spell, tall minarets
And battled watch-towers peer aloft once more,
And slender columns from the cold earth springing,
Rise like tall spectres from the marble floor,
Bearing a canopy with gems all bright,
And fretted arabesque and stars of gold
O'er flower and gushing fount their soft rays flinging,
Make thee all radiant in a sea of light,
Dazzling with beauty as thou wert of old,
Fair palace of the Moor!

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

XL.

THE place in front of Notre-Dame, though unencumbered with the buildings that have since those days encroached upon it on all sides, was all-insufficient to contain the living tides that poured into it early on the following morning. Up each narrow avenue or lane that gave access to it from the town and university, the crowd might be seen in long vistas endeavouring to push onward to the scene already thronged to suffocation. The windows, balconies, and even roofs were alive with human heads. Every fanciful architectural projection, and the niches belonging to most of the houses, bore their living burden—everywhere the eager human face met the eye; and so closely were the masses wedged together in the square, that any chance desire to get out of the press, or to recede or advance, would have been vain indeed.

Yet there seemed but little to gratify public curiosity. A large scaffold on the construction of which workmen had been employed the better part of the previous day, and ever since dawn, was only near its completion; the men being employed in decorating it with crimson cloth, and placing several seats covered with rich stuffs and hangings at its further extremity facing Notre-Dame. Every trifling incident, however, connected with the morning's work seemed fraught with interest to the people, who eagerly watched every nail that was driven home, and awaited with unwonted patience, not unmixed with pleasure, the moment when the drama should begin.

In those days the agency of wealth was not necessary to afford excitement to the population of large cities; it often came ready made of rather a racy description. Nor was social enjoyment sought in lighted halls sacred to the few. Life was passed in the streets, where high and low blended together, often in seeming familiarity, without the remotest possibility of infringing the iron barrier that then separated classes. The marriage ceremony in the church porch—the divine justice in the lists—the *fête* and the penance—everything was public. The pomps of royalty, as well as those of the Church, were open to all sorts and conditions of men. The chivalrous display of the former—the gay processions of the latter, its fasts and carnivals, its binding and unloosing the wild spirit of the multitude filled the streets with an animation unknown to us; for it was not, like ours, mechanical or local. It was not necessary to gain a particular spot, but only to be in the street—to live in it—to enjoy it. In the street the tale-teller and the minstrel touched the chord of fancy or emotion more powerfully, perhaps, in the unsophisticated minds they addressed than the purchased volume or place at the opera or concert-room procure to the privileged of our days. The crude dramas were

played in the open air. There were no close carriages to convey prisoners to the *grand* or *petit Châtelet*. The pleasures as well as the pains of life were every-day incidents open to all. The courts of justice formed the only exception to this principle of publicity; but even they, in some measure, conformed to it. The sentence pronounced against the Order of the Templars being read to them upon a scaffold and in the hearing of the assembled people, was no innovation; and to witness this ceremony high and low, young and old, all the population that Paris contained, were now gathered together on and about the place of Notre-Dame.

It was, indeed, no mere vulgar crowd over which the eyes of those perched on high could wander as over a gaily-tinted *parterre*. There might be seen the plumed barret of the knight, and the bonnet encircled with gold chains of price that bespoke the respectable burgher, side by side. Varlets of great houses in their parti-coloured vestments, struggling in vain to gain the great personages whose suite they formed, but from whom they were divided by bare-armed and muscular artisans; and masses in sombre brown or black, citizens of little note, threw out, so to speak, the light and colour of the picture. In the balconies overhanging the place, brilliant black eyes, beaming from beneath the baroness' coronet, and the silver veil that bespoke a knight's lady, watched the preparations with grave decorum; whilst below on the house steps, raised above the crowd, the humble maiden in her brown hood, or nature's own ornament, raven tresses, betrayed more animated interest. But they were little heeded by the male portion of the assembly. The day's occurrence occupied the mind of every man there present, and filled his heart with contending emotions.

The overbearing pride of the Templars and the dark crimes imputed to them had made their very name odious to the Parisian burgher; who, with keen remembrance of their insolence, felt a personal triumph in their overthrow. Still the suffering they had endured since their fall had greatly mitigated this feeling—there had been time for hatred to cool, and for reason to assume its sway; and those were not wanting who questioned the veracity of the accusations made against them. Was it possible, many asked, that men capable of aberrations and enervating vices such as those ascribed to them, could endure toil and hardship—be the first in the fray, the last on the battle-field—remain robust in frame, energetic in will? Then, if they denied Christ in their secret conclaves, how was it that they preferred torture and death in Holy Land to turning renegade to the Christian faith? They might, it was true, have dabbled in magic—a serious charge enough, for no doubt was then entertained but that man could, at his pleasure, pierce beyond the visible limits of this world; but though the Church declared such an attempt to be a crime of the deepest die, the still, small voice in each man's breast murmured something about a certain amulet, or a certain wise woman sought in an hour of weakness, certain spells that had been tried, certain secret—most secret devices, in numbers or in mystic forms, which had not been whispered even to the confessor. And this still, small voice, is in every generous nature the agent of universal indulgence and forgiveness; reminding us not only of sins committed but of sins contemplated—prevented only by circumstances

There remained, indeed, the story of that idol-head, Bafomet, the supposed object of heathenish adoration in the Temple; but one thing the quick-witted Parisians had taken in at a glance. If this idol were so universally adored in the chapters as was averred, how was it that it had hitherto escaped the vigilance of the king's emissaries?—how was it that not even the knights, who had made the most ample confessions on the rack, had been able to point out any place where such a head could be found? and the confidence of many in its existence was greatly shaken.

Again, the people loved not their king. His rapacity had made him odious; and the nature of his devotion to the Church was proved to them by his open persecution of the late Pope. Clement was known to be his creature, and their alliance against the Templars might well be suspected to be based on not the noblest of motives. By such doubts were the spectators agitated until the solemn peals of Notre-Dame recalled their attention to the scene about to be enacted.

Slowly and majestically did the clergy emerge from the portals of that celebrated cathedral, headed by the Bishop of Senlis, brother to Marigni, the Templars' cruel persecutor, and the legates sent by the Pope, especially to watch this trial that it might not remain wholly in the hands of the French clergy and the king. Their deep purple robes and low-crowned, broad-brimmed, crimson hats, with long tassels of the same colour, contrasted with the French bishop's stole and violet robes; but most conspicuous to the eyes of the crowd was the white frock of a Dominican friar, whose pale, cruel countenance was fully revealed by the hood being thrown back. This personage was Father Imbert, confessor to the king, and one of the bitterest enemies of the Templars. A group of the high clergy of Paris, in their full canonicals, formed a *cortège* to the legates and bishops. All their faces bore a look of joyful triumph, which showed itself in the countenances of the Italians in mere pride, but deepened in the French clergy into vengeful malignity; whilst the sharp features of the Dominican darkened into actual ferocity. To the imaginative, the aquiline, strongly marked features of the Italians seemed to say: "Frenchmen, look at us well. We, the Romans, govern the world. Your sovereign may call the King of England his vassal; but both are our master's servants. Look well at us, that you may know the colour of that blood which alone furnishes rulers to the universe." And the people noted them well; and seemed to think that the pride of a French Templar was even more endurable than that of an Italian cardinal.

The sparkle in the eye and the smile on the lip of the French clergy might be thus interpreted: "Ah, foolish Templars! You must have your own churches and benefices, and get the faithful to give candles to your virgins, and pay for masses at your altars when interdict lay on the land. False knights of the cross! You would appropriate the money due to us, forbid us to intermeddle in your affairs, and filch us of our dues. Go to—never was there so witless an encroachment!" Whilst Father Imbert's thin lips seemed as if they could utter no words but these: "If ashes are to be thrown on some one's fair frame, be mine the hand to cast them!"

The spectators had full time to mark these shades of expression, and

make their comments upon them, as the clerical *cortége* slowly mounted the scaffold, and took their seats on the chairs prepared for them, awaiting the appearance of the accused. Soon a fluctuation in the crowd nearest the cathedral, accompanied with eager gestures, announced their approach; and a breathless silence pervaded that vast multitude as, one by one, the white mantles of the Templars were seen to emerge from the sea of human heads and ascend the scaffold. They were few in number; but for the most part either the highest dignitaries of the Order, or boasting the best names within it—men who had grown grey under the Eastern sun, and whose red cross might be deemed typical of the blood they had shed in the cause of Christianity.

When these men, who had carried the fame of French valour over distant seas, appeared before the Parisian citizens, no longer caparisoned for fight in their snow-white surcoats over glittering mail, but with cloaks soiled as their fair fame, their pride broken, their fierceness gone, emaciated in look, hopeless in bearing, a chord of deep sympathy thrilled through the whole multitude; a feeling which was augmented by the venerable presence of the grand master, and the melancholy, yet firm, bearing of the dauphin. They cast one pleased look around, as if glad once more to behold the animation of life beneath the blue sky; but were immediately recalled to a sense of their situation by the cardinal legate, who, when all had ascended the scaffold, unrolled a parchment that was handed to him, and began to read their sentence.

The suppression of the Order by a bull from Clement, as Honorius II. by a bull had called it into existence, and the confiscation of all its goods and chattels for the benefit of the Church; was then publicly announced. A smile passed over the ashy lips of Jaques Molay, and a look of intelligence was exchanged between the Templars at these words, which was repeated by the myriads of eyes around that seemed to make a similar comment upon them. Then followed the sentence of life-long durance to Jaques Molay, Guy d'Auvergne, Perraut, Gonneville, and others.

If the public had been deeply moved by the knights' sufferings, they were now wrought upon by the dignity with which they listened to their condemnation—ruin, when their Eastern magnificence was yet fresh in every one's remembrance; and imprisonment when they had so recently enjoyed not only the freedom but the power of kings.

The crimes imputed to the Order—heresy, the abandonment of the Christian religion for Deistical theories and magical practices derived from cabalistic theurgy, and a variety of other charges, were then read over in support of the sentence, with every ridiculous and offensive addition which the ignorance and grossness of the epoch could admit of. So long, however, as these accusations were unsupported by facts the Templars contained themselves; but when the Cardinal of Alba, having finished the catalogue of offences, referred to the depositions of many of the knights and *frères servans* of the Order for proofs of these crimes, their agitation became greater; until the grand master's depositions and those of Guy d'Auvergne made at Chinon—so, at least, the document purported them to be—in which Jaques Molay himself owned, not only to the renunciation of Christ being demanded of each neophyte and the abominable rites that ensued, but even to the adoration of a mysterious

head under the name of Bafomet, being read by the cardinal with a loud, clear voice, Jaques Molay could restrain his ire no longer.

"Would," he exclaimed in a voice of thunder, "that the slave who indited these hellish lies in my name were now at my mercy! I would slay him with as little remorse as if he were a Moslem hound!"

"Sinner!" hastily interposed the Bishop of Senlis. "You are permitted to stand thus before the face of your fellow mortals, and in the light of day, in order that, by well-timed repentance, by public admission of your crimes and thankful acknowledgment of your judges' leniency, you might allay divine wrath and expiate the scandal your deeds have caused in the kingdom of Christ; and you heap fresh offences on your aged head—cast defiance at your judges! Bethink you, wretched man!"

"Remember!" added the Cardinal of Alba, in an emphatic tone.

The aged warrior suffered his eyes to wander over the clerical group, and he encountered the looks of his adviser who had visited him in his prison the day before. The cardinal was evidently much agitated; and after in vain endeavouring to convey a warning, his eyes fell before the grand master's steady gaze.

"I remember, and I understand," said Jaques Molay, in a firm voice; and advancing to the edge of the scaffold, and raising his arms and eyes toward heaven, he continued with solemn accents rendered more vibrating by the intensity of his emotion:

"By all that is sacred to a Christian—by the honour of a knight—by the ashes of my father—by the virtue of my mother—by my own eternal salvation, I swear that the Order is innocent of the crimes imputed to it by its enemies and wicked men!—that I never, at any period, either at Chinon or in Paris, made the revelations attributed to me—unable to devise such blasphemies even in the secret of my imagination, how could I make them? Not beneath the tent where my head has rested throughout a long life have such dreams visited me. These fancies belong to scribes and monklings—to men who have leisure to hatch eggs that breed devouring snakes! How should we renounce Christ who are especially his soldiers—who toil for his glory and die in his hope? If Mahomedan abominations have temptations for us, why bleach the bones of our brethren on the sands of Eastern provinces? Had we sunk so low in each other's esteem, how is it that the *beauséant* has floated so long and so proudly before the eyes of our enemies? There may have been, and may be, reprobates among us—what community is without them?—but the Order is as spotless as the hue of our garments—as holy as the name we bear. Say I not truly, Guy d'Auvergne—my brother in arms—my brother in affliction?"

The dauphin moved slowly to the grand master's side; but it was some minutes ere he could be heard: for as Jaques Molay ceased speaking a low murmur rose in the crowd, which, gradually increasing, swelled into a tempest. The masses were seen, here and there, to wave to and fro, as if agitated by the violent efforts of some to advance rendered abortive by the inertia opposed by a greater force. It seemed apparent, that had not the people been so wedged in together as to render organisation impossible, a rescue would have been attempted. The legates, recovering from the consternation in which they were thrown by Jaques Molay's

recantation, as they called it, and misinterpreting the emotions of the people, proposed to put an end to what they termed so audacious a scandal to the Church in the face of the assembled multitude; but the Bishop of Senlis, reading more correctly the feelings of the crowd, hastened to interpose. It would not do, he assured the daring Italians, with a people so unruly as the French, from whose fury the king himself was on a former occasion obliged to fly and take refuge in the Temple, to interrupt the address of the criminals when once begun. Such a step would even endanger their own safety, and occasion, perhaps, the rescue of the prisoners.

Having persuaded or terrified his colleagues into compliance with his policy, the Bishop of Senlis, availing himself of a favourable moment, quietly descended the scaffold and entered Notre-Dame, whence he emerged no more. His departure was unheeded by the spectators, who had no eyes but for the unfortunate Templars. The dauphin still kept his place by the side of Jaques Molay, who stood calm and serene, his fine head, and long, flowing, white beard giving him the semblance to a prophet of old, his eyes now turned upwards, and anon scanning the multitude with the bold dignity that belongs to innocence. Guy d'Auvergne at length raised his arm; and the murmurs became gradually hushed into a silence so profound that every word he pronounced reached the further extremity of the area.

"I, too," he said, drawing up his stately form to its full height—"I, too, swear that I know nothing of the confessions attributed to me. Not a word has ever passed my lips in confirmation of the horrid slander that serves as a pretext to accomplish our downfal. Would that my right hand had been withered ere I unwittingly affixed my mark to falsehoods so heinous! The grand master and myself have known but one aim and one ambition throughout a long life of peril shared together; and that was to further Christ's glory. By the honour of a D'Auvergne—by the bones of my race—we are innocent of the crimes imputed to us—in the face of God and man I speak the truth!"

"And will you speak the truth?" said the Dominican, turning fiercely to D'Aulnoy, who, wasted with suffering and long confinement, with difficulty maintained an erect position among the Templars at the further extremity of the scaffold. "Speak the truth here as you have done before your judges."

As he took his place near the dauphin, Almeric's pale and worn countenance became animated with enthusiasm, and his body seemed, under sudden excitement, to be restored to its wonted vigour. With chest expanded and head upraised he paused a moment before he spoke, being evidently endeavouring to summon all his energy to make his voice heard.

"Here is one," said Father Imbert, turning to those of the crowd who were within hearing—"here is one whose youthful heart is not yet hardened—whose ingenuity cannot be doubted—who has erred but who repents. Truth will flow from his lips as water from the rock."

"Yes, I will speak the truth," said D'Aulnoy, in loud, clear, ringing accents—"I have erred deeply, irretrievably; but I have sinned as much against the Order as against God. I sinned against the Order by breaking

its rules—by breaking my solemn vow. You, my friends,"—turning to the crowd—"may take unto yourselves wives and know family affections—from these we are debarred. But we were men, and we were frail; and if some, like me, have sought in guilty amours compensation for the severity of our rules, I repeat the perpetration of such a crime was rank rebellion against the cloak we wear. We are accused of denying Christ—never was such an offence ever mentioned in my presence. You may be told that my confessions on the rack were of a very different tenor. It is true. Whilst thirty-five of my brethren had the fortitude to endure death by torture for the sake of truth, to save this wretched body I perilled my everlasting soul. My confessions were lies, extorted by unutterable suffering! The legate has told you that those among us from whom revelations have been wrung, all owned to the same things. The reason is simple—we were all put the same questions, and forced to reply to them. For myself, I spoke of having adored a mysterious male head with a beard. I never saw or heard of such a one. Had I been interrogated as to the adoration of a golden calf, or some sea monster, I should have pleaded guilty to the charge; and of all my manifold offences there is not one that I would more willingly expiate with death than the having suffered my name to be mixed up with these foul aspersions against an Order which embraces the flower of French chivalry."

At the first words uttered by D'Aulnoy the Dominican descended the scaffold, and pulling his hood deep over his face to conceal the fury that animated every feature, hurried away through Notre-Dame with such blind haste, and in such a storm of anger, as would certainly have endangered his limbs had he encountered any obstacle in his way.

If the dignity and heroic bearing of the grand master and the prior of Normandy had deeply impressed the people, D'Aulnoy's suffering, his youth, his ingenuity and frank address, powerfully appealed to their sympathy. Men asked each other if to love a pretty maiden merited such treatment. Then they spoke loudly of the rapacity of churchmen, and angry glances were shot at the priests, which did not shrink before the haughty gaze of the legates. Again that murmur rose, more generally than before—there was a movement in the crowd seemingly spontaneous now, and a rush was made at the scaffold.

At that critical moment, whether they were not aware of the real intentions of the multitude, or were unwilling to profit by them, Hugh de Peralde and Gonneville, on being called, advanced to the edge of the scaffold, and with cheeks paler than their garments, and downcast eyes, maintained the truth of their depositions, declared that all the crimes laid to the charge of the Templars had been proved, and that they were no longer worthy the sympathy of good men.

With a howl of rage and amazement the crowd recoiled. It was evident that the words of the last speakers did not carry general conviction; but the confusion that ensued prevented any effectual interference on the part of the people. As the clergy stood in a small knot whispering together at one end of the scaffold, and the Templars clustered at the other, Peralde and Gonneville approached the grand master with an abashed and deprecating air.

"Forgive, reverend father," said the former; "but the good ship is

hopelessly not, then, make a struggle for dear life, and cling to the last spar of hope."

The grand master's cold eye looked beyond the dauphin's ministers as though nothing intervened between him and space—he saw them not, he heard them not—his features had assumed a stony rigidity.

"And you, noble dauphin," said Peralde, in still humbler tones, clasping his hands together, whilst Gonneville made a motion as though he would have touched him to attract his attention.

"Touch me not, hounds!" shouted the Prior of Normandy, with flashing eyes. "I would not that my hand, which might touch that of a brave emir, all heathen though he be, were defiled by contact with yours! I would fling away my robe had your finger but touched it! Back, miscreants! you pollute the very air we breathe—may the curse of all true-hearted men be upon you!"

The grand master now approached D'Aulnoy, whose connexion with the court had alone exalted him to the honour of sharing this public confession with persons so much above him in the Order as well as in worldly station.

"You were destined for better things than what awaits you, young man," said Jaques Molay, emphatically.

"Your noble example, father, shamed the craven out of me," replied D'Aulnoy; "where you lead I needs must follow."

"We have fought to-day our last battle for the honour of the Order," said the dauphin; "and you have done your devoir nobly, young man."

When D'Aulnoy felt his palm in that of the brave dauphin, and saw his severe eyes beaming with approbation, and those of the grand master full of kindness upon him, he was raised above all petty self-considerations—the very soul of chivalry breathed within him. Further communing was, however, prevented; orders having come from the king to transport the Templars without loss of time back to their respective prisons. The legates and the knights left the scaffold and entered the door of Notre-Dame together; but long after they had disappeared the people filled the place, for it was no easy matter for such a throng to work its way out, and the agitation which pervaded it augmented the difficulty.

The angry surge retreats not from the strand with a more sullen roar than did the people in their homeward tide from the scene that morning. With one of those sudden revulsions peculiar to the French, the Templars, hated and reviled in their pomp and power, were now become popular by misfortune. The grand master's solemn assertion of innocence had sunk in every heart and fired every brain. Philip, even disliked, was loudly taxed with his rapacity and oppression.

As these well-known sounds reached the king's ear through the open casement of his council-chamber, he smiled his own cold and cruel smile, and bent an attentive ear to the advice poured into it by Enguerrand de Marigny, and his more vehement brother the Bishop of Senlis—to the passionate instances of Nogaret, and, as it seemed, with still more confidence to the bold insinuations of the pale Dominican Father Imbert. They all had but one thought and one opinion, whether conveyed in the form of political expediency or of an appeal to Philip's irascibility and passion. One and all demanded the life of the Templars in expia-

tion of what they called their criminal recantation, which threw obloquy on the king's ministers and a slur on his justice.

As Ashley argued the point around him they seemed but to respond to the busy voices within his own breast—the voices of those passions which he had ever sought to satisfy rather than to silence. The unflinching heart which had made him throw Boniface from his papal throne, and unsaddle a whole order of knighthood, now demanded the blood of the still resisting victims; and what demand of that proud heart had Philip ever denied?

XLI.

The evening sun of that same day shone with even unwonted splendour, illuminating the gothic tracery of Notre-Dame, and throwing out in strong relief against the purple sky the numerous turrets and towers which at that epoch adorned Paris. It shed its radiance on the Seine and shone with a deeper glow upon the countenances on which its morning beams had rested. For again the multitude thronged the island of St. Louis—again the bells of Notre-Dame pealed through the air, and anxious crowds hurried from all directions at the sound to join those already there. The movement resembled that of the morning; but the fading glory of the sky was not more distinct from its mid-day glare, than were the details and character of the scene from that which was then enacted. The sun had risen on faces full of eager expectancy; but it set on darkened brows and flushed cheeks that betrayed the uneasy workings of the mind. The morning crowd had been bright and variegated like a very rainbow—that of the evening gathered dark, heavy, sullen, like a portentous cloud: none of the better classes were there. The very bells sent a mournful peal through the atmosphere, and men's voices sounded muffled like subdued sorrow. The locality of the scene, too, was changed. Instead of before the splendid gothic front of Notre-Dame, the people gathered along the water-side at the western extremity of the Isle St. Louis; directing, as it were, their glances across the water towards the sombre forest of the Louvre, from the midst of which loomed its black dungeons; and nothing on the river, in the sky, or on the low, swampy shore opposite, seemed to justify their anxious gaze.

One dark object, however, immediately in foreground, stood out gloomily in the golden light.

The extreme point of the island was separated from the isle itself by a narrow channel, and lay considerably lower in the river than the neighbouring embankment on which the palace stood. This space contained no building of any kind, nor tree, nor shrub; it was a mere expanse of wild verdure belonging, though almost immediately under the palace windows, to a religious community.

On this spot, for the last two hours, a pile had been gradually rising under the superintendence of several shadowy forms in black, brown, and white robes, who during these preparations flitted about it like phantoms. It now assumed a scaffold-like shape with two high stakes driven into it at the summit, and the work being finished, the black, brown, and white robes became stationary round the pile.

Then the Cardinal of Alba, the Bishop of Senlis, the Dominican Father Imbert, Nogaret, and Enguerrand de Marigny, were seen stepping out of one of the palace windows on to a small iron balcony overhanging that fragment of land; and soon afterwards the stately form of the king appeared among them.

As he advanced to the front of the balcony, two figures clad in white robes ascended the fatal pile, and the names of Jaques Molay and Guy d'Auvergne ran, in an awed whisper, through the crowd. The grand master's head was uncovered; and his long, silver hair and beard streamed upon a light breeze that came and went at intervals; and the last rays of the sun about to sink in purple and gold, irradiated his noble form with a flood of light, contending with the haze that was slowly rising from the Seine and partially enveloped him, exaggerating his proportions, and lending to his features, at that moment lighted up with the enthusiasm of the martyr, an unearthly, dreamy majesty, akin to what the fantastic eye may see in the capricious configurations of the clouds, or an ardent imagination conjure up from supernatural realms.

The dauphin's hands were confined and his person bound to the fatal stake; but when the men advanced to the grand master to perform the same office upon him, with an imperative gesture he waved them back; and raising his arm, he extended it towards the palace window where his enemies stood with gratified malignity to watch his last struggle. Once, and once only, did the eye of the aged man glance upwards, as if to read in the skies confirmation of the prophetic spirit that was coming over him; then, gazing at the group on the balcony, he exclaimed:

"I perish innocent of crime and true to my God. May the sacrifice about to take place fall on the heads of our unjust judges. I summon them to appear before the throne at whose foot I shall soon stand, there to answer for their iniquitous judgments—Clement in a month, and Philip of France in a year and a day."

His arm fell—his voice ceased—his proud head inclined on his chest. The sun at that moment went down suddenly; and his person, lately thrown out in golden relief, blended with the dusk.

A deep, solemn "Amen!" escaped the assembled throng as if from one throat; but its lingering vibrations were domineered by the solemn chant of the priests as, with lighted torches, they slowly paced round the pile igniting it on all sides. Their chant soon ceased, and the crackling of the fagots was for a time alone heard; but, suddenly, deep voices rose from their midst singing the psalms with which the Templars were wont to endure those tortures devised for them in Holy Land by their infidel foes. The sound floated clear and mournfully over the river, blending, here and there, with a sob from some kneeling spectator, or the deep curse of a more vengeful spirit.

Their forms, lost in the increasing gloom, were again revealed by the fantastic flickering of the rising flames, whose red glare was reflected in the water, and even threw a tinge upwards on the darkening sky. It soon became so strong as to play at times upon the figures on the royal balcony, and permit the people to distinguish no small emotion in the king's fixed look, compressed lips, and white cheek. His hand was on Father Imbert's shoulder; and its pressure must have been great from the

expression of pain which the monk's physiognomy wore, though he suppressed all other outward token of it.

The flames rose higher and stronger. They threw their blaze across the river, lighting up the town and university, and formed a fiery veil between the Templars and the world; but though no longer seen, their harrowing accents, pouring forth the divine song, were heard over the roaring pile. There was a loud crash—another—another—the focus of light lay low—the voices of the Templars was hushed for ever, and their souls were at the foot of that throne where they had sworn to plead their cause. At that instant the king raised his eyes upwards at the rolling vapour.

"What's that!—saw you *that?*" he said, in a suppressed voice.

"A shooting star, sire," said the cold voice of Father Imbert.

"True—'tis hot—very hot to-night," observed Philip; and retiring from the balcony he withdrew to his private apartment.

Many hours later Philip, unwatched by mortal eye, stood upon that balcony gazing intently on the same spot. The night was dark and hazy. Not a star shone forth—not a light glimmered from the many dwellings on either shore. But darker than all the rest was one small point. It was one of the black pages of France's history just written by Philip's own hand. There was a black spot, too, in his own conscience which no effort—no triumph—no penance—no absolution could ever wash out. This was one of those crimes of magnitude which seem by a sort of moral justice to demand retribution even at the hands of after generations, and which the philosophy of history for the most part proves.

Enlightened as Philip was, he was not above the superstition of his age; and the awful summons of the aged Templar in his last hour sank deep into his soul. An inner voice seemed to say, "Thy race is run—thy joys are over—thy hopes are at an end—thy star is set;" and the king, as he passed his hand over his feverish brow, longed for a keen blast to cool it.

He was roused from his painful reverie by the sight of many lanterns passing to and fro along his own royal vineyards, which extended to the river brink. The same flickering lights could be seen in even greater numbers on and about that black spot. He heard paddles propelling boats towards the place; and unable to divine the object of these movements, and being in no temper to bear suspense, he hastily muffled his person to avoid recognition, and descended into the palace gardens.

Entering the vineyard and taking an empty alley whose foliage screened him from the people walking between the rows of vine—their lanterns, shaded by the leaves, throwing a less general light than when seen from the window above—he could without difficulty overhear their discourse without being himself observed. The various remarks or exclamations that escaped them were, however, unintelligible, until he was somewhat abruptly enlightened on this subject by a man who bore suddenly down upon him.

"Have you any of the precious relics?" he said, supposing the stranger he addressed to be on the same errand as himself.

"Yes," replied Philip.

"I, too—I have been fortunate—I have some of the blessed ashes of the blessed martyrs. It is lucky they thought not of placing a guard over them, or of sweeping the remains of their crime into the river. To-

morrow it will be too late—not a charred bit will be left, and let them pluck the fragments from the breast of the Parisians if they dare! But you are not moving off?"

"I am waiting for a friend."

"Who is yet on the spot; I understand. Good night, neighbour;" and he passed on.

"He is right," muttered the king; "to-morrow it will be too late! But who could have guessed the affair would take this turn? Even Imbert, calculating as he is, foresaw it not."

Two men passing on the other side the vine hedge behind which the king stood, stopped a moment, apparently for some one lagging behind.

"And so," said one, "we are to have a new pope and a new king before the year is over, neighbour; the old Templar said so at the stake."

"It'll be no loss any how," replied the other; "the one is loose, the other cruel; no one will stoop to pick up their dust, I trow." The friend came up, and the party moved on.

Being unwilling to hear more, Philip took a path leading to the river-side, desirous of gaining a spot whence he could make his observations without the chance of being accosted. As he advanced, however, voices in eager, though subdued, discourse arrested his attention. The solitariness of the place, and the precaution observed in speaking so as not to be overheard, aroused his curiosity, and he stood still.

"Is it true, think you," said a voice, "that the grand master really summoned the pope and the king before God's throne within a given time?"

"Even so, Craon. Taillefer, in a clerical disguise, stood by the funeral pile and heard it himself."

"It will be a strange meeting up there between them," was the answer, in deep, solemn accents. "I wonder if Philip will think of that at his last hour."

"The slanderer!—the murderer!" exclaimed another voice.

The king's hand instinctively sought the hilt of his sword; but a superstitious emotion, more congenial to his time than to his personal character, arrested it.

"The grand master summoned him, you say," pursued the first speaker; "he should have cursed him rather!"

"By his ashes and those of Guy d'Auvergne do I now curse him!" said the deep voice that had before spoken. "May his race be blighted! may none of his blood remain to sully the throne of France!"

"Amen!" responded the other, in solemn accents; "but it is late, and if we would follow in the track of him you wot of, we have far to ride before dawn."

"Having paid the last tribute of respect to the illustrious victims, I care not how soon we depart. Our horses are waiting for us at the right place, I doubt not."

The next instant the sound of oars told the king that the speakers were beyond his reach, and he turned moodily towards the palace. On his way he saw a group of women at no great distance from the fatal spot. Confident in his disguise, he drew near them, but they took no heed of his approach.

"Have you too been collecting ashes on the islet?" said Philip, abruptly, addressing one of them.

"Of course we have," replied the woman, somewhat sharply. "There's no telling what luck those ashes may bring into a house; they are an heirloom to leave to one's children's children."

"Ay, it'll be long," said another, "before so cruel a deed will be again ventured upon, and Philip will have no time to do it. Mind my words, gossips—he who did not spare the grey head will not live to have grey hairs himself."

"I heard of those who saw it," said a third, "that it was awful to see the glory spread round the grand master when he summoned the king—his voice sounded like the trumpet of judgment."

"With their last breath he and the dauphin swore to their innocency," said a fourth.

Philip turned away in disgust, and entered the palace. He had sown blood, and reaped curses! The thought griped his strong heart. He sought his pillow, but could not sleep; and morning found him at the window of his cabinet still gazing at that one dark spot.

A VINTAGE SCENE IN ARCADY,

A FRAGMENT.

By G. W. Thornbury.

Hark! the wild bee's drowsy hum
Deep amid the vine-flowers straying;
Hark! "the pipe that's never dumb,"
Where the wanton fauns are playing.
Hark! the cymbals' brazen clash
Scaring the dark-spotted pards—
Where the wine-brooks leaping splash,
The deep wine-cups' broken shards
Dip the satyrs, stooping down,
Till their mouths grow red and dyed,
And their fawn skins, torn and brown,
Dabble in the purple tide.
How they start within the wave
A bright face to see up-glancing,
When they hear the uproar brave,
Measured pulse of distant dancing,
Rustling of dark ivy wreath,
And the tramp of startled deer
Scared by revel drawing near—
See! each leopard bears a Faun—
Robe by pine-boughs rudely torn,
Girt with gold ears of the corn,
Face as flushed as summer dawn,—
Hear them shout and clap their hands
To the wine-skin bearing bands

Of the white armed Naïades,
Who, all wreathed with jewelled shell,
Trip to soft notes of a flute
And the chime of silvery bells
Wake the echoes long since mute;
Hither dark-haired Dryades
That within the forest dwell,
Violets twisted for your crown,
Necklace of the sweet fir cone
Stored in caverns dusk and brown,
Red ash berries for a zone.—
Yonder, 'mid the thick vines, see
The wood-nymphs and the satyrs be,
Leaping, laughing, till the wine
Foams up like the surging brine
Frothing on a rocky shore;
Then begins the wild uproar,
And if one in their mad dance
Reel into that blood-red sea,
Ay, good lack! how glad they be!—
How they hold their sides and laugh
When he rises from the flood,
Like one of old Neptune's brood,
Or stoops down again to quaff,
Like a Mars when his gold mail
Oozes blood at every scale.—
When they're weary, not till then,
Drink the other mountain men,
But they take a draught so deep,
'Tw'd send three youths to their last sleep.
And they swear the red wine's savour
Never yet was fresher—braver,
And their faces all a-glow
Crimson as the poppies show.—
Beating on the swollen skin,
Makes, methinks, a merry din
(When there's gurgling within).
Circe (sweet enchantress) here,
Syrinx and her trusty fere;
The bright-haired Hesperides,
And yonder the Danaïdes;
Near them sit the Syrens three,
Weary of the changeful sea,
With pale sea-weed regal crowned,
Twined with pearls by Scylla found.
Here's the blossom that sprang up,
Hebe when thou dropt the cup;
Here's the crystal lily too,
Juno that we owe to you,
One drop from thy snowy breast
Turned the crimson flower-leaves white,
As the crocus' purple light,
Was by wounded Venus prest. * *

THE IMPERIAL RECLUSE OF YUSTE.*

CHARLES V. had two great failings: his piety was deeply stamped with bigotry, and his love of good cheer had assumed the form of unrestrained indulgence; but to counterbalance these two vices he had a whole host of simple and manly virtues as well as more imperial attributes. Of the sincerity of his religious feelings, even though carried to excesses of superstition and tyranny, there can be no doubt; his domestic attachments were remarkably strong and his friendship unwavering; he was also kind and generous to all who were in attendance to him. His love of literature, fine arts, and the arts and sciences generally, was one of the great features in his character, and the cherishing and cultivating such ennobling pursuits would probably have soothed many an unhappy hour, had it not been for that atmosphere of austere bigotry which tainted and corrupted everything around, and which buried literary, scientific, martial, political, and even imperial tastes beneath a monk's cowl; just as the old Kings of Aragon are represented in their sepulchres of the abbey-fortress of Poblet, in Catalonia, by two statues, the one a warrior, invested with the insignia of royalty, the other a monk, robed in the garments of penitence and humiliation. What the Alonzos, the Fernandos, the Juans, and the El Conquistadors of their time had been after death, it remained for Charles V. and Philip II. to become during life. From their time the magnificence and the power of Spain may also be said to have begun to decline. The double effigy represented not only royalty but the whole Spanish nation, half monk, half soldier, never exalted by one without being to a still greater extent humiliated and abused by the other.

Among the interesting traits of character eliminated in the "Imperial Recluse of Yuste" by the pains-taking M. Amédée Pichot, in illustration of his latter monkish days, we may notice his partiality for animals. He had an aviary, and used to personally superintend the feeding of his pets. He had a parrot so marvellously instructed as to have become an historical personage, like the parrot of Augustus. This talkative bird used to amuse the monks of Yuste no less than the emperor himself. The Queen of Portugal, to whom he was indebted for this ornithological wonder, had also sent him two cats, remarkable for their smallness; and they were almost as much in favour as the dogs, which had been the emperor's companions from the days when he was an active young sportsman, to those when his prowess was limited to the destruction of doves in the chesnut-groves of Yuste. Charles V. had always been partial to the beasts of the field, and he had in better times founded a menagerie at Gand, his native city, the nucleus of which had been obtained from a ship captured in the war with Barberousse by his galleys, and which was conveying to the sultan a lion, a lioness, as also certain Christians, "pour donner a mangier aux dictes bêtes," says the chronicle of Vandenesse; no doubt

* Charles-Quint; Chronique de sa vie Intérieure et de sa vie Politique, de son Abdication et sa Retraite dans le Cloître de Yuste. Par Amédée Pichot, auteur de l'Histoire de Charles Edouard, du Dernier Roi d'Arles, &c.

leaving it intentionally ambiguous, whether the Christians were there to feed the wild beasts or to be given to them as food.

The sympathy of the emperor towards living things is attested by a touching tradition concerning certain swallows. Two of these messengers of spring had, it is said, built their nest in the tent of Charles V. when he was engaged in the siege of a strong place. When the time came for striking the tent, the emperor preferred losing it altogether rather than destroy the swallows and their young brood.

Charles V.'s intellect was of that capacity that it embraced everything. Justly proud of his talents as a virtuoso—the partiality for sacred music being hereditary in the Dukes of Burgundy—he himself superintended the organisation of the monastic choir. So quick was his ear that he could perceive when any of the choristers were out of tune in a moment, and he would reprimand them with one of those Spanish oaths which escape the mouth sometimes, even of the courteous Don Quixote. He was at once sensible of the presence of a stranger, and a professor from Placenzia experienced this to his cost; for all the professor that he was, he sang so little in harmony with the monks, trained by Charles, that orders were sent to him to hold his tongue, or he would be expelled from the church. The imperial recluse joined in the musical exercises of the church himself; and so powerful was his voice, that when confined to his own room it was heard through the glass-door which separated it from the church. As a proof of Charles V.'s musical talent, an anecdote is told of a certain Guerrero, chapel-master at Seville, sending him some masses of his own composition; but the emperor at once detected them to be nothing but plagiarisms, and named the *maestri* whom he had put under contribution.

M. Amédée Pichot establishes a curious analogy between Charles V. and the Emperor Napoleon. Napoleon, like Charles, had a mathematical head, and he loved the exact sciences, which did not prevent his admiring Ossian—so Charles V.'s taste of mechanics did not interfere with his love of poetry and the delight he took in the allegory of Olivier de la Marche. According to the same authority, both might have appropriated to themselves the application of steam to navigation—both let the opportunity slip. There was this difference, however: Napoleon would never even witness Fulton's experiments; Charles rewarded Blasco de Garay handsomely for an invention, the utility of which he could appreciate, although he had not the zeal to prosecute it till it attained perfection and success.

M. A. Pichot tells us, that the acquaintance of the emperor with Barbe de Blomberg, the mother of Don Juan, had its origin in the young lady having been sent for to soothe his melancholy by her song. *Ut moerorem cantu allevaret*, says Strada, the authority for this statement. "This was six years after the empress's death," and, our author adds, "who does not know how much there is that is seductive in the voice of a woman who inspires herself with our grief in order to make us forget it—bears the burden of our sorrows in order to lighten us of their weight?"

The discreet major-dome, Quixada, is said to have introduced the child Geronimo, afterwards Don Juan, to his wife, Doña Magdalena, as the son of an illustrious friend whose name he had promised to keep secret;

so that Doña Magdalena naturally believed that the friend in question was Quixada himself. Her enlightenment on this mystery is related as springing from a strange circumstance, no less than that, in a fire, Quixada saved Geronimo first, and his wife afterwards; whence from her intimate knowledge of his character, she deduced that Geronimo must be the child of a more illustrious personage than the major-domo himself.

Charles V.'s favourite flower was the carnation, as it had been before him of King Réné, and of the great Condé when prisoner in the Bastille. Floriculturists are indebted to the emperor for a beautiful variety which he himself introduced from Tunis.

The emperor was not distinguished for repartee, but a few good sayings are reported of him. At the time of the rebellion of the *Comuneros*, a courtier said he could inform the emperor where his greatest enemy lay concealed. "You would do better," said Charles, "to tell him where I am, than tell me where he is." Charles having been solicited, when in Germany, to destroy the tomb of Luther, he answered, "No, no; I make war against the living, but not against the dead."

The Jesuits, by whom he was frequently visited, possessed more supple tongues. The following is related of the Père François Pécheur. Charles, in order to show how disinterested he was in affairs of this world, told him he had been chosen as arbitrator between Don Alonzo de Cardona, Admiral of Aragon, and the Duke of Gandia, the reverend father's own son, in reference to the right of possession in a domain. "Sire," said the father, "I do not know which of the two is in the right; but however slight the claims of the admiral, I should beg that you would extend your favour towards him." Charles V. observed that that would no longer be partiality. "Sire," replied Father François, "the admiral is, no doubt, more in want of the revenues of this domain than the duke; and it is written, 'Give unto the poor.'" This display of abnegation was, as the father well knew, better calculated to win the favour of the emperor than would have been a less well considered line of policy.

According to Gonzalez, about the same time that Charles learnt the disastrous news of the fall of Calais, on which occasion he said, "The loss of reputation is worse even than the loss of the place," the consoling news arrived that the Queen of England was in a condition to promise to his son an heir to the throne of England. Happily for England the promise, according to M. A. Pichot, was only a symptom of dropsy.

M. A. Pichot treats the reception by the monks of the emperor into their order as a fable. He describes him as ordering the ceremony to be gone through, and to be followed by the customary festival; but he avers that he disappointed the expectations of all, by neither appearing in the church, nor at the refectory, nor even in the gardens.

Our author also combats the statement, generally received, that Charles V. added the voluntary mortification of personal chastisement to the moral mortification he had already received from the conqueror of Metz and Calais, "at least publicly." The emperor was, he argues, far too ill and too seriously disabled to be equal to the administration of corporal chastisement to himself, and it would not have suited his gravity to have allowed himself to be publicly fustigated by his attendants. It is however stated that every Friday during Lent the emperor appeared regularly in his place in the choir, and, prayers over, he put out the light

which he held in his hand, and there fustigated himself with so much sincerity that the rod became red with his blood, to the singular edification of pious people.

Two rods of discipline figure in the inventory of curious and precious objects, made by his attendants after the emperor's decease; and, used or not, they were transmitted as true relics to Philip II., and edified the visitors to the Palace of the Escurial, where they were deposited. Perhaps, says M. A. Pichot, Philip II. made use of them with a more robust arm than even the paternal one, if not with a more sincere devotion. Our author admits therefore of the son what he denies in regard to the father; or rather we believe he admits the fustigation, but denies its having been carried to the extreme of scarifying the patient.

For upwards of a century the fashion of a similar devout practice existed, not only in Spain but also in France, where, under Henry III., the court had its energetic flagellants. In the procession of the 12th of May, 1588, Henri, Duc de Joyeuse (Brother Ange), crowned with thorns, and fustigated by two of his brethren, represented the march to Calvary. The art was even carried to a certain degree of perfection. In order to render the indulgences attached to discipline by the confessors more attractive, the fair senoras decorated the birch with ribands and bows, and lovers chastised themselves before their windows. Many even fell martyrs to the absurd practice: among them the dramatic poet Lopez de Vega is said to have hastened his end by too energetic a discipline.

Like Mignet, M. Amédée Pichot attaches little credit to the various stories current in regard to the funeral service performed during the emperor's lifetime: he believes that such a service was gone through, but he does not give credit to all the accessory details with which it has pleased imaginative chroniclers to surround it, and to which grave historians have lent their sanction and authority.

One of the monks of Yuste, who relates the scene which preceded, according to Mignet, Charles V.'s first attack of the fever which caused his death, and in which he contemplated successively the pictures of the "Last Day" and the portrait of the empress, added, it appears, naïvely enough: "If the mere representation of the Last Judgment, painted on canvas, could bring on a *relapse*, what must he have felt when twenty days afterwards he presented himself before the tribunal of God himself." —("Historia breve y sum ana eti," p. 45, of M. Bakhmzen's analysis.) Yet M. A. Pichot says, with Mignet, that the emperor experienced that evening his first attack of "putrid fever." The physician Mathys, writing to Valladolid an account of his patient's sickness, makes no mention either of the effect of the funeral service or of the contemplation of the pictures which preceded the fatal illness; he attributes it more to the reverberation of the sun against the white walls of the convent which brought on a violent headache and fever. It is very likely that the two circumstances so much dwelt upon by historians had probably little or nothing to do with this last illness. They were merely accidental accessories. The emperor had been a long time ailing, his health was quite broken up. Yuste does not appear to have been at any time a healthy place, and Mignet tells us that it had been that season more than ever inflicted with malaria. The heat, fatigue, and exposure to a prolonged service,

may have aggravated the evil, but the attack, it may be presumed, was upon the recluse at the time he ordered the lugubrious solemnity to be enacted.

M. A. Pichot declares that there was nothing but what was perfectly simple and even edifying in the spiritual intervention of the Primate of Spain at the decease of the royal recluse. No doubt it was so; but there was still sufficient that was unorthodox to have been afterwards raked up as an accusation by a hostile general of the Inquisition.

The following is M. Amédée Pichot's account of the last moments of Charles V.:

It was eight o'clock in the evening when the last scene in the life of Charles V. commenced. Two things had always appeared to him to be dreaded by one who wishes to die well: and these were to be carried off suddenly, or to be deprived of his senses when his hour should have struck. Feeling himself grow weaker and weaker, he thanked God that he had permitted him to appear before him, and the serenity of his mind never failed him for a moment. He never ceased to recognise those who came near him; he smiled at some, or spoke to or answered others. One of his physicians, Doctor Cornelio, who had himself had an attack of fever, withdrew, leaving Doctor Mathys at the bedside, and who from time to time felt his pulse and communicated his impression of the result to those who were present by a whisper or a movement of the head. The confessor occasionally took his place and muttered holy words, which Charles V. listened to, mingling his prayers with those of the monk, or raising up his eyes to heaven. Quixada and Van Male never left the room, but sought to discover by the looks of the imperial moribund if they could still accomplish one more small act of duty —one last service for him. The other attendants went to and fro, but without being allowed to pass the threshold of the door. The primate, the prior, the chaplains, the family of Oropesa and Don Luis d'Avila, took their places at intervals by the bedside of the dying man. Near midnight Charles V. wished to turn in his bed, and he called William Van Male. "William!" he exclaimed, and the companion of his sleepless nights, who knew what he wanted simply from hearing his name, hastened to assist him, happy that the emperor should once more condescend to lean upon his shoulder. Charles V. did not effect this change of position, however, without a deep sigh: *Domine jam moritur.* "He is going to die, my lord," Doctor Mathys whispered to the Archbishop of Toledo, who this time approached with Father Francisco de Villalva, the predicator in whose discourses Charles V. took most pleasure.

After having himself spoken a few words, the archbishop made signs to Father Francisco, who had no doubt arranged previously with the primate what should be said upon the occasion: "Let your majesty," said the predicator, "thank heaven for its manifest protection. He caused you to be born on the festival of Saint Matthias, the disciple upon whom the choice of the others conferred the apostleship to make up the number twelve, and the empire was conferred upon yourself by election; God wishes to call you to him the day when the church celebrates the feast of Saint Matthew, that other apostle, who abandoned his worldly goods to follow Christ, as for Christ's sake your majesty abandoned the throne. Like these two apostles, you will enjoy celestial glory when this life is over."

The monks have only transmitted to us these few sentences out of a discourse which was probably much longer, and which was interrupted by Charles V. saying to Quixada: "The time has arrived!" Quixada, who had received the instructions the same morning, brought the wooden crucifix which the empress had kissed with her lips at the moment of death, and which had remained in her bosom till the moment when she was consigned to her coffin. He also brought with him an image of the Virgin, a consecrated figure, for

which that princess had entertained great devotion. The two relics which Charles V. preserved so religiously for seventeen years, faithful to the memory of his most tender affection, as also to the religion which had consecrated it, were placed in his hands by his most intimate attendant. He contemplated them for some time, his eyes only being drawn from them to be lifted up towards heaven. He was heard to mutter, "I come, oh Lord!" *yo voy, senhor!* And his right hand being no longer able to hold the crucifix, the prelate took it, and presented it to him to kiss it; it was whilst looking at this revered sign that he uttered three sighs, pronounced the name of Jesus, and a moment afterwards had ceased to live. Thus perished the man whom Quixada pronounced in his grief to be the greatest man that ever lived, or that ever will live! expressions of devoted admiration, to which we prefer those which the same sentiment also inspired to his piety as a Spanish Catholic. "I believe that as a Christian he went direct to heaven. I have seen the Queen of France, who died in a most Christian-like manner, but the emperor expired in a way that was even still more pre-eminently so."

Mignet and Mr. Stirling describe the emperor as holding a wax taper in his hand; M. Amédée Pichot's authority for a crucifix is a letter of Quixada's in the Gonzalez MSS. M. A. Pichot adds also some superstitious traditions regarding the emperor, which were handed down by the monks. Among them are the following:

The emperor had spent an hour in prayer in his room; he thought himself alone, but on raising up his eyes he saw a silent figure enveloped in a large cloak standing before him. "Who are you?" he inquired of the stranger. The mantle unfolded itself, and the emperor saw the image of himself as if he had stood before a mirror. It was his spectre that appeared to him, to inform him that his last hour had come, and that he must prepare to die.

A comet showed itself in the heavens the first day of Charles V.'s illness, stopped in its career towards the north over Yuste, and ceased to be visible at his death. This was the seventh comet, or the seventh time that the same meteor had shown itself during his reign; and it was remembered that a hairy comet, preceded by an eclipse, had also announced the death of the empress in the year 1539.

At Vililla, in the kingdom of Aragon, was a famous bell endowed with marvellous properties; because, according to some, an angel had stood at the font for it; or, according to others, because at the moment of casting it the Wandering Jew, or some other mysterious personage who was passing by, had thrown into the fiery furnace one of the thirty pieces of silver given to Judas Iscariot. The prophetic bell of Vililla always struck of its own free will whenever a King of Aragon died. It tolled for the death of Ferdinand the Catholic, and it tolled again at the death of the emperor, his grandson.

There is another story told of a lily growing beneath the window of Charles V.'s room, which failed to flower at the proper season, but burst into bloom on the night of his death, exhaling the sweetest perfume. Cut off to adorn the catafalque, it preserved all its brilliant whiteness and sweet fragrance for several days. On the seventh day, the attention of the monks was called to a marvellous bird, as large as a swan, black from the head to the middle of the body, and white from thence to the tail, which barked like a dog, and which, coming from the east, settled on the roof of the chapel for a brief time, and then flew off towards Gargenta-la-Olla. This bird came back five times, settling upon each occasion immediately over where the body of the emperor lay in state, and uttering the strangest noises. Sandoval concluded from these prodigies that the heavens by a comet, the earth by a lily, and the air by a bird, each separately testified their sympathy for the death of the emperor!

A FEW CHAPTERS ON THE WORKING CLASSES.

No. V.—The Working Man's Politics.

BY E. P. ROWSELL, ESQ.

I WANT a poor working man. If he be out of work and in distress, so much the better for my purpose. I look out of the window, and in two minutes I see a man I know answering this description. He is thin, and his clothes are ragged. Capital! My friend, come and join me here for a short time.

We have stood together gazing at the traffic for a very brief space, when a peculiarly handsome equipage rolls by—the carriage contains a lordly-looking personage, with a high forehead and florid complexion, and proud air. Next him is a lady of great beauty, superbly dressed, and opposite are two lovely children brimful of health and spirits. My eye encounters that of my companion just as his has withdrawn from this pleasing sight; and now forget, reader, the particular individual, and hearken simply to the tale which the expression of this eye tells me of the thoughts and feelings of the class to which my poor hungry-visaged friend belongs.

Thousands of half-starved men day by day stand staring at splendid carriages as they flit by, filled with highly-favoured occupants. They see the elaborately dressed man of fashion, they see his beautiful wife, his happy children. And when this sight is present to the outward eye, is the mental closed or dull? Not so; it is vigorous and piercing beyond description. In each case does it examine every sign of famine and of misery presented in the man's own aspect, it gazes on his torn and soiled garments, it directs a steady stare into his sunken bodily eyes, and rests upon his sallow, fallen cheeks. Does it stop here? Oh, no; it has even drearier objects for contemplation. It pierces intervening grand mansions, and looks into a wretched house in a narrow, dirty court. A month ago it might have seen in this house nothing to distress it—there was then laughing and merry-making—the head of the family was in full work, and there were sufficient, though by no means abundant, materials for comfort; but a change came, employment failed, and now a month having passed, and not a sixpence been earned, much privation and sorrow have ensued. Therefore, when the mental eye has penetrated the gloomy abode, it is met by tokens of trouble which make it flinch and quail again, as though blindness had overtaken it. There is a loved wife on a sick bed, there are ravenous children clamouring for food. The mental eye, so to speak, staggers, fades, and, in a moment, its sight is gone.

And what follows in each case of these thousands of half-starved, unfortunate men? There has been a dark contrast between that which has just flitted before the bodily vision and the scene which the mental embraced until it became temporarily blinded, which has well-nigh rent and torn the man's very existence from him. His is not a case of long-continued, slow-wearing, and soul-subduing distress; his is, very likely, only temporary misfortune; and if he be but patient and preserve a stout heart, he will probably weather the storm, and again know fine weather. And for this very reason he is intensely sensitive, and fearfully irritated

at the trouble which he is so unused to bear. Oh! the angry thrill which ran through him as that proud equipage rolled by. "Why is this —why should this be?" He is, and always has been, an honest, hard-working man—a man who has striven to do his duty. And so long as he could earn just enough to support himself and his family, who so contented, who more happy than they all? They had not riches, and envied not those who had. But when the work failed, and they were almost—almost! they *were* starving—for relief from the parish they would never ask—the question would occur, and *did* occur, and he put it: "Why should others, who absolutely did nothing for their living, be actually revelling in luxuries and be surfeited with enjoyments?"

But this angry and unreasonable mood does not last. A very little consideration shows him, that in the mere fact of another being better off than himself there is nothing to grumble at, and that it would be quite as unjust for him, if he had the power, to seize and appropriate the goods of the owner of the carriage, as it would be for some incorrigible rogue and vagabond to enter his own humble dwelling and drag the bed from beneath his sick wife, merely because the reprobate wanted one himself.

And (he thinks further, for he has plenty of common sense, and faculty of understanding main principles) suppose all were put upon an equality this very day, that equality would have ceased in most striking extent one week hence, and the system of superiority and inferiority, of weakness and strength, of indigence and wealth, have resumed its sway. And is not such a system just? (he thinks) for were it otherwise —were a man's goods arbitrarily seized upon at his death, and divided among a community—where would be the encouragement to industry, to talent, to prudence? It were impossible to conceive any state of things more disastrous than that which would ensue were any iniquitous interference attempted with legitimately-acquired property. Progress under such a system were impossible; dull apathy would take the place of energy and enterprise; horrible confusion and the darkest misery be everywhere present; and after all—after scenes sickening in their hideousness—after a period unparalleled in its ghastly terrors and misfortunes—mankind would find the monstrous absurdity of that which they had been seeking, the ridiculous impossibility of its being grasped for more than a few hours, and the absolute certainty that, even could it be maintained, any good resulting from it would shrink into insignificance when compared with the evil it would involve.

We say that, with all his ignorance, and with all his irritation, our working man would see these points for himself, and see them, too, even a few minutes after the handsome equipage had rolled by and he had gnashed his teeth at it. He would feel, ay, hungry as he might be, that it would be an awful thing if an amount of physical power could lay violent hands on the wealth of the world and attempt to apportion it equally amongst its inhabitants. That physical power, if it should arise, should, at least, have his feeble strength exerted against it.

But thou hast not yet passed through temptation, my friend, and there is another evil to assail thee. Against the monstrosity of seizing another man's bread because thou hast none thyself, thy good sense revolts; but supposing some one should whisper to thee, "These men would not be rich were it not that they had unrighteous and unjust laws to help them to riches; the law favours the wealthy and depresses the poor; this

principle pervades it, and no wonder. The laws have been made *by* the rich *for* the rich, and therefore their object cannot be a matter of surprise. No good can come to the poor man until he shall have the making of the laws himself, and so shall rectify the evil. And this object must be sought, dwelt upon incessantly, talked over at periodical meetings, and sacrificed for freely and perpetually. And the great means of attaining this object is, 'Universal Suffrage.'"

Who was it who *did* first whisper this to thee, my friend? One who said he was a well-wisher! fouler falsehood never was uttered. He was a brawling, idle vagabond, who, too lazy to work honestly like thyself, disgracefully misused the boon of education which benevolence had conferred upon him, and basely and treacherously earned a far better livelihood than thou by hard labour couldst possibly obtain, by agitating, and disturbing, and insinuating, and turning men's minds from fit and proper objects to others which they could not grapple, and which therefore worked to the destruction of their peace and overthrow of their happiness.

Yes, this knave, taking paltry advantage of thy present ill condition, and the irritability produced by it, has had the meanness to persuade thee that far better than sitting by thy sick wife's side with consolation and words of hope—far better than drying thy children's tears and speaking of trust in an all-powerful source, is sitting with a pipe and a pot in a public-house parlour and discussing the subject of the state of the nation.

Now, I neither know, my friend, nor care what may be the arguments in support of this much-vaunted panacea for every ill which may afflict the working man, but I believe that it would be as much a remedy for the rheumatism in your shoulder as that it would in the very smallest degree improve your position or increase your welfare. A vote for a member of Parliament, if it were conferred on thee to-morrow, would only be to thee, I am sure, a clog, a hindrance, a source of constant annoyance, and give rise to perpetual ill-feeling. The use which you make of that vote would occupy too much of your own attention, and far too much, for your peace and welfare, of the attention of others. It is no answer to this to say, that with universal suffrage should be coupled vote by ballot. There never would be really secret voting. In some way or other a man would let it ooze out how he intended to vote, and, subsequently, how he *had* voted; I am satisfied that in very few cases indeed would it be unknown how a vote, in intense probability, would be recorded. I reject, then, all consideration of vote by ballot, and repeat that the possession of a privilege, which you not only could turn to no good account but which would worry and vex you incessantly, which would cause you to be ever open to solicitations, threats, secret enmity, to plausible reasonings calculated outrageously to mislead, and to dictatorial assertions designed to cow and overwhelm you, would, most emphatically, be a privilege coupled with a dark curse, as baleful a boon as your worst enemy could wish you to possess.

Could no public-house parlour bear witness to the evil of the working man turning politician, and in company with a number of his fellows meeting periodically to discuss the state of the nation, with intellects in a condition which would render the question of why two added to two should make four an inquiry of insuperable difficulty? Could no broken men's heads, and broken women's hearts, and hungry children's stomachs, raise a loud outcry against anything which would give the slightest

impetus to the disposition to rail against every cause of evil save the cause of idleness or debauchery, and to spend the time in reviling imaginary sources of woe, rather than in removing those which are most tangible and apparent? Let a poor man but begin to busy himself with politics, and in the defenceless state in which his ignorance must place him, imbibe the notion that he is *only* poor, and *only*, mayhap, distressed, because some monsters who have money and power are exerting themselves to keep him poor and distressed, and with what heart will he turn to his labour, with what peace and amount of contentment will his poverty be endured?

But passing over this evil, which might perhaps be said to be only of a subordinate character, let us ask whether, in the more important point of view of its final results, universal suffrage would be such a boon to the working man (whatever it might be to other classes), that it really is a grievance that every working man in the kingdom, down to the agricultural labourer, with his family of five children and his ten shillings a week, has not a vote for a representative in Parliament? In answering this question, we would earnestly desire not to display the slightest want of charity or kindly feeling towards the industrial classes. Those who have read our previous articles regarding them in this periodical will hardly, we think, accuse us of harshness or illiberality upon any of the points we have heretofore considered. But we must say, that a very little deliberation suffices to convince us that it would, positively, be an awful thing for the country if the elections for representatives in the "great council of the nation" were turned, as doubtless they would commonly be, by an overwhelming mass of working men's votes. Consider for a moment. Who would be the men who, in all probability, would universally find favour with the main body of the poorer class. Put Lord John Russell and some roaring demagogue on the hustings together. Let Lord John make his speech—matter profound, sagacious, masterly—style slow, hesitating, and, to an extent, wearisome. Now let his big opponent come forward and deliver his address—matter frothy, superficial, short-sighted—style rapid, vehement, overpowering. And what will be the result? And then, suppose in addition, that whereas Lord John shall have said that although he will do all he can for the poor man, the poor man can do, and must do, a great deal more for himself, his fiery companion shall now, on the contrary, declare that with sweeping alterations in present laws, and the enactment of innumerable new ones of sagacity hitherto unapproached, the poor man will be in that happy position, that though he but sit and twiddle his thumbs, bread, and meat, and beer, and clothing, and lodging, shall none of them be wanting,—who does not see that with intellect untrained to detect the sophistry or the absurdity of the one, and to grasp and appreciate the talent and the honesty of the other, the poor man would hiss the great statesman and real friend, and mightily cheer the thorough vagabond and abominable knave!

And imagine a multitude of worthies of the kind of this latter forming the majority in the great council! It might be that having been elected they might conveniently forget the monstrosities of which they had been guilty on the hustings, and undeterred, perhaps, by a new law of triennial Parliaments, turn a deaf ear first to gentle remonstrances and afterward to bitter abuse. But even this less objectionable course would be attended with imminent danger, and through the length and breadth of the

land would go up a yell of execration at treachery so outrageous and so glaring. And would not the cry for vengeance succeed the yell of hatred? Assuredly it would; execution of the threat would follow its utterance, and the dark scenes of a revolution once more convulse the empire and strike down its prosperity.

But, as is most likely, the monstrous doctrines and preposterous promises promulgated from the hustings would be heard again in Parliament, and measures in accordance with them would be sought to be carried out. We say "sought," because at the very threshold a contest would arise on these measures appalling to contemplate. In this case it would be the wise and the prudent, the haters of strife, the lovers of religion and order, who would sound a trumpet through the land, and call upon every honest man to arise and save his country from irremediable disaster. The only measures which would secure unbounded popularity for the paltry politicians of whom we have been speaking, would be measures which any person who had been accustomed to work with his brain instead of with his hands would see were not only indefensible and unjust, but would not secure or even touch the end for which avowedly they were designed. We may be sure that it would be a leading and pervading feature of these measures, an attempt to *cast out* poverty from the land, to confer such privileges upon the working class that they could *not* be distressed, and could *not* want. Independently that Scripture tells us that such an object cannot be accomplished, the briefest reflection will show that unless you could banish *all* sources of poverty, dissipation, vice, imprudence, it would still remain, and to a wide extent. But a little further reflection will show, too, that any effort to banish poverty, over and above the effort to render as free and unrestricted as may be the man who works for his living, any endeavour stretching to the extent to define and prescribe a certain advantageous position to the working man would be as absurd as it would be mischievous—as ridiculously impracticable as it would be shamefully unjust. Something of this kind, however, we are satisfied would be required, and perhaps attempted, as the result of universal suffrage. We should have then, so to speak, to shake hands with Old England and bid it good-by, for certainly the hour of its dissolution might be near at hand.

But suppose there were no uproar, or merely an unsuccessful opposition on the part of the wise and worthy of the community, still, what would be the result to the working class of the carrying of measures the fruit of such a combination of knavery and folly? The shortest time would suffice to show their miserable unsoundness and their profound absurdity. And simple failure would not be the only result. Disaster and calamity, like a fell disorder, would spread through the land; every healthy operation of intelligence and industry would be at a stand-still; and the coveted position of extended privilege and larger comfort escaping the grasp, loudly would the poor man deplore the weakness which had led to dissatisfaction with a far happier, quieter, and more peaceful condition.

No, no, friend working man; it is your own strong arm labouring vigorously which must help you to increased comfort, and enable you to rise a step higher in the ladder of life. It is not a fact that there are any laws which render you a slave, which hamper and tie you down, which make profitless your labour or useless your efforts. Things to

be amended, things to be altered, there may be—there are, and there is every desire to effect necessary changes and to accomplish required improvements. It is not because your laws are made by men of ample means that they are the work of men of narrow minds. Does the man of property legislate for you in a less liberal spirit than would the man of one hundred pounds a year, who, perhaps, under a different system, you might be disposed to elect as your representative? Believe me, no. The man who has a large stake in the country will be exceedingly anxious that the country should go well; whereas he whose property is comprised in a sixpence will be rather pleased than otherwise if a general scramble should take place to-morrow. Again, I say, place confidence in your own strong arm and your own stout heart; place confidence in the growing intelligence of the age, in the increasing desire to help every man who is worthy of help and will help himself; strive to go forward, but to go forward in true and legitimate paths, in the old-fashioned ways in which your fathers trod; and although these ways may not bring you to grandeur and power, be assured that, travelling in them, you will not lose the company of happiness and peace.

JOINING CIRCUIT.

It is now more than a few years past since I first joined the —— Circuit. Each bar has generally rules peculiar to themselves as different clubs have, but in most, as in mine, the course for any gentleman desirous of joining the circuit was, without any previous warning, to join as a probationer, as he is called, until he is balloted for and admitted a member to dine at the bar-mess in any three towns. Having gone through this preliminary ordeal, the only test directly applied being his powers of singing or telling a good story, either of which was called for with the utmost form and solemnity, he was required to serve notices, signed by the member who intended proposing him, on every member of the circuit. This, however, by-the-by—the good old times when barristers used to bring their horses with them, and ride from town to town in a body, more like a troop of irregular cavalry than grave and learned jurisconsults—had passed away, and railroads north, south, and west—those mighty levellers and reformers—furnished a much more speedy and convenient means of transit than the older and more independent style. Though not quite a stranger, as I was acquainted with one of the leaders of the circuit, and one of its cleverest and most gentlemanlike juniors—the pallid and interesting M——, long unappreciated of attorneys—I yet felt a little awkward, not to say nervous, entering, as I was, an unknown country, and about, for the first time, to be present at a scene of which so much is heard and so little known—a circuit-mess. I had learned that several of the members would leave town for the —— Assizes by the four o'clock train P.M., in time to arrive for dinner at ——, where the commission was to be opened the following morning.

I was too shy and too proud (I should rather say ignorant, like most very young men who have mixed but little with the world) to inquire

from my friend M—— as to whether or not it was usual to dress as for a state dinner party; and for fear of mistake, I had got myself up in the necessary quantity of black cloth to constitute full dress. In this supposition I turned out to be wrong; and the trifle of finding myself, on getting to the train, the only man in evening dress, added to my awkwardness. When I arrived at the station, amidst the usual bustle and din of a railway train about starting from one of the great termini, I found half a dozen of the —— bar standing chatting on the platform, while one or two of the younger members were strolling up and down peering into the different carriages in search of pretty faces. When I came up, L——, our leader, who is the pink of courtesy, shook hands with me, and then turned to resume his conversation, while M—— did the same thing. I was tremendously annoyed at not being received with more *empressement*, and instead of joining them and getting into the same carriage, I went off in a sulk, and ensconced myself in the corner of a distant carriage, tenanted solely by an invalid old lady and an overfed lap-dog as wheezy as herself. I have since mentioned the circumstance to both those men, who assured me, as I very well believe, that their reason for not introducing me to the others present was either under the impression that I already knew them, or from forgetfulness that I was then coming for the first time to join them. I mention this, as nothing is of more use to young men not much acquainted with the world than to be informed that every little omission or shortcoming in those marks of attention which they may think themselves entitled to are not to be construed, as they generally are, into deliberate unkindness, if not insult.

My more junior readers may imagine how unenviable were my feelings during my journey of some two hours, and especially if they should be, as I was then, one of those gloomy individuals disposed but too readily to regard everything *en noir*. "When those who know me—I may say my friends—give me the cold shoulder this way, what may I expect from those who are perfect strangers?" I asked myself. The darkest hour, however, precedes the dawn, as we are told. When we arrived at our destination it was just coming on dark on a raw March evening, and I got out as grand as a vizier, and as sulky—to make use of a classical phrase—"as a bear with a sore head." I was aware that the etiquette was for a probationer to be introduced in the first instance to the father of the bar, as the senior member is called. I had, therefore, conned over, to be delivered in the most dignified manner, some such phrase as—

"M——, may I take the liberty of asking you to introduce me to the father; I trust you will excuse the trouble, eh?" When up comes the aforesaid M—— with—

"Halloa, ——, my boy! where the deuce did you stow yourself away? We thought you would have been in our carriage."

I mumbled out something about thinking they were full—my notions of dignity and sulkiness beginning to thaw a little at this style of address.

"Oh, we had lots of room," was the reply; "but do come along, and look sharp, or we shall get a cold dinner. Get your traps put along with ours, and let them be taken up to my lodgings at M'Evoy's until we get a bed for you, if they have not room for you at my place. We are only about two minutes' walk from the bar room, so shove along until I do the needful for you by introducing you to old F——."

I accordingly put all my dignity and sulkiness in my pocket, rushed at a railway porter, and with his assistance got my portmanteau, hat-box, &c., together, and gave them in charge to a carman who had M——'s luggage and one or two others'; and trotting down the railway steps, and up straight into the town, through an atmosphere to my town-bred nose redolent of turf-bog, we rushed into the —— Arms Hotel, and up into the bar room.

They had been seated at dinner some time before we arrived, and the moment we entered the room there was a perfect cross-fire of salutations, and demands for news from Dublin—how far had the chancellor got with his list that day, and what records were coming down for trial? I passed on with M—— through the noise and bustle of men taking their places, and room being made for the new comers at the table to the head of the room where the father was presiding, and being introduced in form, received a hearty shake hands, and a welcome to the —— bar.

After this, M—— whispered to me: "Take a place wherever you find a vacancy, and make yourself at home."

I accordingly passed down again to the foot of the room, and recognised an old college friend, who was sitting next to the junior at the foot of the table, who immediately made a place for me beside him.

"Take your first glass of wine on circuit with me," said my grave and hard-reading friend, with a quiet snigger spreading over his dark, intellectual face. "I am half fuddled already over P——'s champagne, and you must work hard to overtake us."

My head was in a little whirl from the sudden change from a raw, dark, spring evening into the brilliantly lighted room, the novelty of the scene, and the familiar intercourse with men of whom I had previously known nothing except seeing them leading at *Nisi Prius* or in Chancery, and from my own feeling of timidity, not to say awkwardness. It was not their fault, however, if I did not find myself at my ease.

The junior—the swarthy and dark-browed hope of one of our midland baronets, equally famous for his whist playing, his good heart, his volubility in cursing, and his kind manly bearing—as soon as he learned my name, without any further preliminary begged to take wine with me; and taking me under his charge, guarded against the new comers being overlooked by the servants in the bustle, and did the honours of the table for me. I had hardly finished my fish before I had been challenged to take wine by the father and every silk gown (as the Q.C.'s are called) at the table, and then for the first time I was able to take some note of the scene.

Imagine the best room of the best—one might say the only, hotel in a country town, long, and not very lofty, with a cheap paper and some tolerably good prints. A very respectable show of plate, &c., however, on the sideboards, and sundry tubs thereunder, whose rusticity was atoned for by the goodly collection of bottles with tin-foiled necks, bespeaking champagne refrigerating in them. An old-fashioned sofa, covered with some kind of cotton stuff, graced the head of the room. A long, well-spread table, with a profusion of light, ran nearly the full length of the apartment, at which were seated some five-and-thirty gentlemanly-looking men, in every description of coat and waistcoat (professional costume is not much attended to on circuit), varying in age from the almost beardless junior of two-and-twenty, fresh from college and contingent retainders, to the father—a fine relic of that bar, whose eloquence was only equalled

by their polished manners and social acquirements—who had passed his eightieth year, and told familiar stories of Plunket, and Bushe, and Doherty, and retailed absurd and unknown puns of Soler and Deane Grady.

A tremendous bustle filled the room, and from the tone in which they talked, especially the junior members, who kept generally together a good deal, and who contributed three-fourths of the noise, from their frequent and hearty peals of laughter, the challenges to take wine, the calling for attendants, the popping of champagne corks, removing the courses, one would be reminded of a public dinner with all its noise and confusion toned down a little, and free from its roughing and occasional vulgarity. One glance, however, at the men would dispel the notion, as the air of breeding and distinction which invested those who were not (as most were) of highly intellectual and well-carved features is but seldom met in such places. Any attempt to convey or retail the jokes, *bon-mots*, and amusing anecdotes would be as futile as to attempt preserving the sparkle of champagne which has been poured into a glass.

The wordy war of the juniors, who were the principal talkers, and their constant cross-fire of puns and witticisms, reminded me of nothing so much as a wrestling-match between two adepts, when a trip from one man, which seemed to threaten the downfal of his adversary, and which shook his firmness considerably, is met by a counter-trip, which almost prostrates the first assailant. Every man was alive to the game, and watching *auribus arrectis* for an opportunity to dash into the friendly *mêlée* and fire off his shot, although by his interference he was almost certain to get a volley in return for his rash attempt. Our leader, one of the first Nisi Prius lawyers at the Irish or any other bar, the accomplished and ready tactitian L——, of whom more anon, sat listening with evident pleasure to the sallies of the younger men, but without ever opening his mouth (except to put something into it), or taking any part in the discussions. Whether it was that he was husbanding himself for the more serious business of the morrow's records, as was most likely, or that he feared an encounter with some of our ready and flippant juniors, he, more than any other of the principal men, held himself entirely aloof; and, like a spectator gazing upon the stage, laughed or smiled at the alternate discomfitures and triumphs of either side.

The chief and ruling spirit was one new as myself to the circuit, being at the time a probationer, but, unlike me, a man of the world, and competent from his social acquirements, as from his great natural ability to powers of repartee and anecdote, to lead in any society. Busheton was several years my senior, being some eight-and-twenty years of age, his coming to practise at the profession being, as he often told me when we became afterwards, as I hope we ever shall be, intimate friends, an after thought. As the descendant of one of Ireland's most distinguished judges and orators, he was heir to a considerable property, which he had impaired by that extravagance in which young men in the hey-day of life and their own masters (his father had died when he was a child) indulge in. He was one of those few who can pass through such an ordeal as the life of a fast man of fashion and *ton*, skilled in the mysteries of a handicap, and able to hold his own at *écarté* with the first players; learned in book-making, and successful as a gentleman-rider in steeple-chases, unscathed; as good-hearted, as generous, as kind, and as honourable a fellow as ever breathed. His humble, though not envious chronicler, at

that time his rival, was one of the first to discern that legal turn of mind which mark a man out for a lawyer, and the readiness with which he mastered a difficult subject (making all the time the best jokes upon his own ignorance, and laughing at them as heartily as any), which have earned for him since a success at his profession as considerable as any man of his standing could hope for. From the moment of his joining he was the life and soul of the circuit, and the dinner party was sadly *manqué* if we did not hear his joyous hearty laugh and sparkling sallies; and the whist party equally dull, if we had him not between the deals to mimic us to our faces, and make us laugh heartily at our own peculiarities a little exaggerated. His title to be first introduced, however, cannot be questioned, notwithstanding some of the great names of the —— bar—(of whom, by the way, more or less is known by most people)—as he was, on the occasion of my joining, the most junior candidate; and my notion of precedence is like that in the navy, which makes the admirals go last.

Figure to yourself, considerate (as I trust you are) reader, a ruddy complexioned man, rather under the middle size, with roundish shoulders and a funny way of twisting his legs about in moving along, dressed very fashionably, and with great care and neatness, almost bald—(before he was many hours in your company he would have used up every joke that you could make on this point)—with a little very reddish hair, and large whiskers of the same colour, shaved back from his cheek and curled most carefully in one large curl down each side of his face, a hook nose, well-shaped eloquent-looking mouth, a magnificent forehead, the finest light-coloured eyes you ever saw, with long lashes a little lighter-coloured than his hair, and you have before you one of the most agreeable and gentlemanlike companions and best fellows you ever met.

I fear in my eagerness to introduce some of our worthies that I have lost sight of my object, in attempting to offer what must be a very meagre outline of my joining circuit. *Revenons à nos moutons.*

After the cloth was drawn, &c., and fresh wine put upon the table, the father rose to propose the healths of the two gentlemen whose champagne all had been drinking, and who had recently been called to the dignities of her Majesty's counsel-at-law.

The first gentleman responded in the usual after-dinner style of speech; but the second, his eyes twinkling with fun through his gold spectacles, and contradicting the otherwise stern expression of his face, when he got up to return thanks, after an unusually long pause, began to feel himself all over with his hands, rubbed his eyes, took off his spectacles, looked at them, put them on again, blew his nose, looked round, and begun in a tone and with a manner which gave almost all the point to his address:

"Father and brethren of the —— bar, I have read in my earlier days a story of an individual named, if I recollect rightly, Rip van Winkle. The tale went that he fell into a deep sleep, and successive generations of articulate speaking men passed away during his slumber; that when he awoke from his trance and went forth into the world and saw the changes of men and manners, and dress and buildings, and almost of language, he began to doubt of his identity, and that it was with very great difficulty, and after very serious consideration, that he arrived at the conclusion that he *was* Rip van Winkle. Now, after all the fine things that have been said by our respected father of a certain individual whose

health he has just proposed, and whose name is *idem sonans* with mine, I confess I was a little puzzled to know who it was he meant, and to doubt about my identity with the individual named by him. But after some consideration, and having regard to the fact that there is no other person of the same name a member of this bar, and that it was as a member of this bar that he proposed the individual bearing my name, inaccurate as I fear the description is, I have forced my mind to the conclusion that I and the individual so spoken of are one and the same person."

He then went on for a time in this serio-comic strain, which in our then mood, and coming from so grave a man, tickled us to an extent that the mere reader of the words can hardly imagine. The sole remaining business of the evening seemed to be an admonition *timely*, and therefore expressed to be *considerately* for the probationers to be ready with a song at the next town, in order to show what their pretensions were for admission.

Soon after this the men on business began to drop out to read their briefs and hold consultations, and the juniors, who had neither briefs nor consultations to attend to, but had grace enough not to sit soaking claret, betook themselves to the lodgings of some man who was bound for that evening to procure tea for any number that might come, and sundry packs of cards, with the laudable intention of smoking cigars to improve their reasoning powers by fighting for the odd trick at whist.

A DREAM OF A REVENGE.

BY JOHN STEBBING.

I.

ADELAIDE MORLEY always woke early and always rose late, and therefore was quite prepared to say good-by to her cousin Anne, who entered her room about seven o'clock, with a pale face and light hair, and dressed in a green pelisse. They had been spending the summer together at Adelaide's home, as they had often spent it before, and Anne was now returning, at the first chill of autumn, to the house of her widowed father, to make preparations for the marriage which was shortly to take place between herself and the young doctor, whom Adelaide had openly declared, long before, should be her cousin's husband.

The shutters of the bedroom window were still closed, and the pale morning light struggling in threw about the apartment a kind of sea-cavern glimmer, in which Anne looked, Adelaide thought, like a treacherous mermaid. The parting between the cousins was very brief; Adelaide threw her arms around Anne's neck, and Anne clasped about Adelaide's wrist a hair bracelet, and was gone.

The fair head still rested on the pillow, and the waxen arms remained as they had carelessly fallen, when a little girl of three or four years of age entered the room, and climbing on the bed commenced a thousand little tyrannies against her defenceless sister; but suddenly she started back with a cry, of as much indignation as pain, as the blood flowed from a long cut on the back of her hand, which she had roughly drawn

across the diamond in the bracelet on Adelaide's arm. The adventure served completely to arouse the listless beauty, and in a short time the child, who soon forgot the mishap, entered the breakfast-room in her sister's arms.

The gentleman with the shaggy grey eyebrows is, of course, the father; and the lady with the pink cheeks and the handsome nose, the mother. The post has just come in, and the table is half covered with letters. Glass-doors in place of windows open on to the lawn, where the mountain ash and the copper beech dispute with each other in brilliancy of autumn colouring. Everything around is quiet and elegant, and, like the young lady who presides at the breakfast-table, seems to love to lie awake in repose.

Of the letters on the table two have black seals, and are directed in the same handwriting—the one to Mr. Morley, and the other to his niece, Miss Anne Tremlet, who has that morning left. The gentleman reads his letter, and all present are as much excited as they ever allow themselves to be excited about anything, by the announcement that a relative of the family has died and left Anne the bulk of his large fortune. The remarks usual on the receipt of such intelligence pass freely enough for a short time, but not being inspired by any of that envy which generally adds piquancy to our observations when we speak of the good fortune of our friends or relatives, are quietly subsiding, when the young doctor, Anne's betrothed, having just entrusted his mistress to the aged servant sent to be her attendant on the journey, comes across the lawn and enters the breakfast-room by the folding doors.

Adelaide was drawing a likeness of her little sister Amy on the table-cloth with the handle of a spoon when Henry Norbury entered, and she knew perfectly well, without looking up, that he was handsome and clever. No one said anything of the important news they had just received; and when the young doctor left them to pursue his avocations, it was still with the idea that he was working for the comfort, if not the absolute support, of his future wife.

Adelaide sat all the afternoon in her room, and felt bitterly in her heart that she had but planned the match between Henry Norbury and her cousin in revenge for his neglect of herself. And now the thought that he not only loved, but would receive with his betrothed a large fortune, distracted her.

Revenge is a very pleasant thing if you can pursue it without exciting yourself overmuch, and if it do not happen to turn out a blessing to its object. But in both these respects Adelaide felt that her little scheme of revenge had failed. Her love for Henry Norbury still existed in her heart in the form of an agony of jealousy; and she was quite conscious that it only needed the leisure attendant on a good fortune to develop the talents and mutual affection of the two lovers into almost perfect happiness.

She glanced sideways at her glass, and for an instant, as she caught the gleam of her beauty through her rich auburn curls, she thought that it might not even now be too late to gain the object of her long-cherished passion; but as she gazed over the wide landscape before her, and marked the rough stubble-fields and the damp shadows of the woods on the hills, and remembered how often she had gazed upon them year after year in her agony, she clasped her hand upon her forehead in despair.

There she sat, while the tears trickled slowly down and dried upon her cheeks. Sometimes the closing of a door or the sound of a voice disturbed the silence, and then all was still again. The few cottages of the village that were unhid by the intervening hill showed their lights through the hazy autumn air, and the evening brought a moaning wind with some pattering drops of rain.

The lady's maid came in with the intelligence that there would be company at dinner, and Miss Morley sought a temporary forgetfulness of her troubles in a most elaborate toilet. She wore an azure blue dress and a crimson and gold Indian scarf, whilst her arms reposed with a dewy gleam amidst falls of the richest lace.

The dinner passed off most agreeably; Sir Moxon was there with his lady and son; the two Miss Churchills had brought the curate; and a couple of schoolboys, who believed themselves desperately in love with Adelaide, had come to spend one more pleasant evening in the pleasantest house in the neighbourhood. The gentlemen sat but a short time over their wine, and the drawing-room was soon tenanted by several brilliant little groups of conversationists. One of the Miss Churchills played a piece of German music, in which there was a representation of monastery bells, and subdued the tone of the voices to that pitch which never fatigues, and does not, therefore, seek relief in a constant change of subject.

The proverbial courtesy and dignified bearing of elderly baronets shine in all their lustre in Sir Moxon, and it is pleasant to see the air of gentle politeness with which he converses with the two schoolboys, who are seated beside Miss Adelaide on the sofa. He does not attempt with any false enthusiasm to enter into cricket reminiscences, or other delights of school life, but allows the conversation to dwell on those subjects which are intimately connected with his own position in life. He tells but few anecdotes, yet his remarks are very anecdotal, if we may coin such a word, for they are constantly exhibiting the slight secret trains of circumstances which always exist, and are rarely apparent between successive events, whether public or private. The crude sense of mingled ignorance and knowledge, in which lies the source of most of the awkwardness of boys, disappears before such treatment as this, and they unconsciously afford valuable assistance to the gravest experience by the expressions of their views of life and things. Of such a nature was the conversation amongst the group which we have before us; and when the schoolboys made their bow they believed that they were going to school the next morning completely men of the world; whilst Adelaide had found patience and consolation in a quiet consideration of the various views of life which opened before her in the conversation of Sir Moxon and her young lovers.

That night Adelaide Morley entered on a new plan of life; when she had washed away with her tears the bitterness of her heart, she resolved henceforth to accept no pain or pleasure which she could not trace from some impulse of her own mind. Life, she considered, should be a state of rest; a bed on which one should lie awake in repose. She wished for revenge for her slighted love, but it should not be to her a source of violent excitements; she would draw her revenge and its objects to either side of her heart, and then, suddenly withdrawing, leave them face to face.

II.

"So fortunate that it did not occur till after the marriage!" said all the gossips of the neighbourhood; but fortunate or unfortunate, it was too late to be altered now; Adelaide Morley was dead. A quick fever had laid her plans and her revenge under that neat gravestone in the corner of the churchyard. And, therefore, as this story has lost its heroine, it must go on with her ghost.

III.

A GHOST is anything you like: an old pair of shoes, or a creaking arm-chair; but Adelaide's ghost was a bundle of papers directed to Henry Norbury, and given to him after her death. There were the few little letters he had written to her when he was a schoolboy; and there were letters she had written to him, but never sent, full of passion and bitterness; and then there was her diary, in which she had laid down the plan of marrying him to her cousin, that in the disappointment which she believed would come upon his ambition when his energies were clogged by a wife who could not aid him by a single energetic thought or feeling, he might turn to her.

When he had finished the perusal of the papers, Henry Norbury fell back into his chair with a sad smile, and pondered for some moments; but suddenly an expression of horror came over his countenance, and he started up and seized the diary, in which he recorded notes on the cases of his patients. He perused and re-perused one particular case, and then, with a sadder voice than had ever yet come from his mouth, he exclaimed, "It must have been so! She poisoned herself!"

IV.

ONE of the two schoolboys who have been mentioned went to India and got shot, but the other stayed at home to become an attorney and marry Amy, Adelaide's little sister. He had not been married long before he discovered a flaw in the will of the uncle, who had left his fortune to Mrs. Norbury.

The father of Adelaide and Amy was this uncle's brother, and, in default of a will, inherited his brother's fortune. The attorney pursued his advantage; his father-in-law was dead, and he recovered the whole fortune in right of his wife.

Henry Norbury and his family were now penniless. By returning to the profession on which he had entered with such brilliant success, he scarcely earned enough to keep his wife and children from starvation. He found that Adelaide Morley had too truly estimated her cousin's character, for she who had been the very type of all sweetness in prosperity, sank beneath adversity into a state of virulent imbecility; and still ever across his path floated Amy, reminding him of her whom he had so truly loved in his boyhood.

"Well! Adelaide, your plan has perfectly succeeded," said the care-worn doctor, as he sat up late in his library arranging papers. He arose, and with his hand tightly pressed to his forehead sought his bedroom. The next day he was very ill, and a few days after another practitioner had to record another strange, fatal case of fever.

THE ROBBER'S WIFE.

A ROMANCE.

By William Roper.

III.

My good, my guilt, my weal, my woe,
My hope on high—my all below.
Earth holds no other like to thee,
Or, if it doth, in vain for me!—Byron.

It is not our intention to leave the reader in equal obscurity with the baron, as to the movements of Klieber, immediately after his escape from the castle.

Plunging into the woods which fringed the edifice on the eastern side, and carrying his lovely but still senseless burden with the utmost ease in his athletic arms, he pursued a path evidently familiar to him, until he arrived at a wide open clearing in which stood a small hut. Here he paused, and gave vent to a low peculiar whistle. In an instant he was answered by a man who appeared almost to spring out of the earth, and who exclaimed, in a gruff voice, "Who goes there?"

"A friend," was the answer.

"Ah, my captain, is it you; safe and sound?"

"Bring forth the horse, Wolfort," said Klieber, in reply.

Wolfort passed into the hut, and returned almost immediately, with a powerful black steed, ready saddled and bridled. At this moment Agnes revived, and gazing wildly round, exclaimed, "Where am I?"

"In the arms of your husband," replied Klieber, springing to the saddle and placing her before him. Agnes groaned deeply, and closed her eyes again, as if to shut out thought.

"Rejoin your comrades in the cave, Wolfort," said Klieber, "and tell them I shall return to-morrow." And with these words he galloped off, without waiting for a reply.

After about two leagues' hard riding, he suddenly checked his steed, and Agnes, opening her eyes for the first time during the journey, perceived that they had arrived at the door of a small cottage, in a very secluded part of the forest, from which issued an old man, with long white locks and furrowed brow, and bowed down with years and infirmities, who exclaimed, as he beheld them, in sharp and hurried tones, "Welcome, Captain Klieber! What tidings bring you me? Is the destroyer destroyed? Am I yet revenged?"

"Nay, he yet lives, good Martin," said the robber. "Have patience. The time may come."

"Patience!" shrieked the old man; "'tis ever thus.—Patience! and the murderer of my child exists!—Patience! and he dwells in splendour and riches and contentment, while I drag on a miserable existence in sorrow, in solitude, and despair!—Patience! and I stand upon the verge of the grave, which he will live to trample on and laugh over!—This is ever the comfort that you bring me. He lives, say you? Why doth he live? He cannot be invulnerable!"

"Peace, old man!" exclaimed the robber, sternly. "This passion ill besorts with thy white locks. I say again, be patient. The work of vengeance hath begun."

The old man was silent. Klieber dismounted, and lifting Agnes from the saddle, said, "Take charge of the horse, Martin. I shall pass the night in your cottage."

"And this maiden?"

"Is my wife."

The old man bowed his head, and then led away the steed; while Klieber, taking the hand of Agnes, gently conducted her into the cottage.

The room in which they found themselves was of small dimensions, rudely but decently furnished; and on the hearth a scanty wood fire was burning. The robber closed the door and motioned his unfortunate young wife to a seat; but Agnes, mute till now, fixed her beautiful eyes upon him with a mingled expression of sorrow and indignation, and asked: "What means this? Why have you brought me here?"

"Seat yourself, Agnes, and I will inform you," replied Klieber; "and when you have heard my story, my guilt will seem less monstrous than it now appears."

But Agnes, bursting into tears, threw herself at his feet, and exclaimed, in an agony of supplication: "Oh, hear me first, Leopold Klieber, if such indeed be your name! Take me back to the home from which you have dragged me—restore me again to my father's arms, and then let us part to meet no more. I swear to you that I will never wed again—that I will cherish your memory as I first knew you, not as you now appear to me—that I will never breathe a harsh word against you—and that daily and nightly I will pray for you on bended knees, that though on earth divided, we may meet again in heaven!"

"Agnes," said Klieber, in a firm but melancholy tone, "that which you ask of me is, for many reasons, impossible. You are the wife of Leopold Klieber, and as such you must live. Hear me, Agnes, and hear me awhile with patience. Ten years ago I was living in Heidelberg, the only son of one of the most substantial citizens in that town. I was then in my nineteenth year, and had become enamoured of Ursula, daughter of Martin Claus, an innkeeper. It was no slight and boyish passion, for I was always of a violent nature, extreme alike in love or hate; and such as then I was, I am now. Ursula was beautiful, beautiful as yourself, and I loved her with an intensity of passion, which only a nature such as mine is capable of. Our parents approved of our attachment, and it was arranged that on my twentieth birthday the marriage should take place. Everything seemed to promise happiness, when suddenly Ursula was missing from her father's house, and none could tell what had become of her. A certain wealthy nobleman of the neighbourhood, a man who had passed the meridian of life, but had lost little of the licentiousness of youth, had been staying for several days at the inn of Martin Claus, and had been observed several times to pay marked attentions to Ursula; and on him suspicion naturally fell. Circumstances soon heightened that suspicion into certainty, and Martin Claus and myself proceeded together to his castle and demanded an account of Ursula at his hands. We were treated at first as insolent intruders, and ordered to depart; but on our

persisting in the object of our visit, were scourged—ay, SCOURGED from the castle! By my soul! I cannot even now recal the recollection of that outrage without a flushed brow and a cheek of fire!" And here the robber took several strides across the apartment, and then returning to his position opposite Agnes, continued in a calmer tone: "Let me conclude this tale of villany and sorrow. In vain we appealed to the law. Our enemy had wealth and influence sufficient to overrule the weak voice of justice in this country; and too clearly I perceived that Ursula was lost to me for ever. A change came over my life. The sunshine which should have gladdened it was withdrawn, and thenceforth my soul was in shadow. I shunned society—I became enamoured of solitude—I shrunk with loathing from the busy hum of the town and sought refuge amid the savage haunts of nature. My father died shortly after. I was left without hope, without kindred, without friends, a loveless and solitary man. One day I had been roaming as usual in the forest, and as I turned my steps homeward, I suddenly perceived, seated on a rude fragment of rock, and cooling her blistered feet in a spring which flowed from under it, a tattered and poverty-stricken woman, who, raising her head as I drew near, disclosed to my horror-stricken eyes the faded features of my lost Ursula! At sight of me she swooned, and it was with great difficulty that I succeeded in restoring her to consciousness. When at length I did so, she—— But why need I proceed? It was the old tale. Abandoned by her seducer, she was wandering she knew not whither, and at length, overwhelmed with famine and exhaustion, had thrown herself down to die. In vain I endeavoured to prevail on her to quit the spot. The lamp of life had burnt down into the socket, and—but let me draw the curtain over that scene—suffice it that she died in my arms; and then, as I gazed on the cold but still beautiful clay, I swore a solemn and deadly oath that I would be avenged on her destroyer!" Again the robber paused, and his features expressed a conflict of mingled emotions. Then, after a minute's silence, he resumed: "Little more remains to be spoken. From that hour all thoughts, all feelings, all sensations were merged and concentrated in one deep and burning passion—the thirst of vengeance. I leagued myself with robbers; I was chosen their chief; and the name of Leopold Klieber has become both a curse and a watchword on the banks of the Rhine—a terror to the rich, and a blessing to the poor—a thunderbolt to the oppressor, and a rainbow to the oppressed!"

Agnes had listened to this sad story with mingled emotions, compounded of pity, surprise, and dread; but suddenly, as the robber ceased, a terrible perception of the truth flashed across her mind, and after one or two vain attempts to frame the question, she said:

"And the—the—your enemy—who is he?"

"Prepare yourself for the worst, Agnes," replied the robber, with a look of pity. "The destroyer of Ursula, and the architect of my ruin, is called the Baron of Falkenberg!"

Agnes uttered a low moan and hid her face in her hands. Then, after a silence of several moments, she again raised it, and said:

"I see it all now. Oh! wretched, wretched girl! *I*, then, have been made the unconscious instrument of your revenge? The vows which you exchanged with me, the deep passion which you professed for me, had

their origin only in this. Shame on you, Leopold Klieber! What wrong had *I* done you in word or deed that your wrath should be wreaked on me? You have punished the innocent for the guilty. Fool that I was, I believed you loved me, and in that belief could have sought to palliate your conduct; for what is there a woman will not forgive, if it be done for love of her? But to be thus wantonly, bitterly, shamefully deceived!—a mere tool to gratify your hatred! Alas! alas! would that I had been laid in in my grave before I had seen this hour!"

"You wrong me, Agnes!" exclaimed the robber, passionately—"you wrong me grievously. Never did man love woman with a deeper, stronger, more heartfelt passion than that which I feel for you! It is true I have made you, in part, the instrument of my revenge; but hear me further before you condemn. When first I learnt from the lips of the Count Lindorf the story of his projected marriage, I conceived the design of forestalling him therein, solely for the purpose of satisfying my long-cherished hope of vengeance; but from the moment in which I beheld you, my heart underwent a change. The passion which led me on was no longer revenge—it was love! Yes, believe me, the springs of feeling which once flowed through my soul, though long dried up, were once again re-opened. I loved you—deeply, devotedly, madly! Behold! I throw myself at your feet. Turn not away from me. Thou art the only shrine at which I dare to worship! Oh, be my guardian angel! my hope, my joy, my love, my refuge! The world pursues me with its hate; then the greater cause that thou shouldst love me, Agnes! What is the world to thee and me? We will be all in all to each other. The law rejected me when I appealed to it; then why should I respect the law? Society hast cast me forth from its bosom; then why should I not make war upon society? All mankind are robbers, and I but do openly what others perform in secret! The statesman talks of patriotism and public virtue, and has his hand in the exchequer while he speaks! The priest preaches damnation upon gluttony, avarice, and extortion, and is himself a living embodiment of the sins which he denounces! But enough of this. Again I say I love you, Agnes. You are already my wife in name. Be so in heart! You shall have every luxury that wealth can purchase—robes, jewels, attendants! To-night this cottage shall be our nuptial temple. The meanest hut is a palace in the eyes of love. And to-morrow I will take thee to the freebooters' wild abode, where thou shalt reign as queen! There beat half a hundred hearts to whom my nod is law. I will increase the number tenfold, and they shall acknowledge thee their divinity. Speak but the word, and the spoils of Germany are at thy feet!"

He had thrown himself at her feet, and, grasping her hand, had spoken with the rapidity and the fire of strong passion. Agnes listened in silence, but as he ceased, replied:

"Speak no more, I beg of you. In vain you endeavour to varnish crime, and clothe rapine with the hue of glory. You cannot by such means win my regard, nor will I ever consent to live the bride of an outlaw! I have heard you patiently; now listen to me. Forsake this life—abandon your present associates. You have wealth, I doubt not. Use it in a better manner than that in which it was acquired. Assume another name, and fly to some distant shore, where, in tranquil retire-

ment, you may return again to virtue. I will accompany you there; I will never desert you, but will be near to watch, to tend, to solace —for, despite the wrongs I have received, I confess that I love you still!——"

She was about to say more, but Klieber interrupted her.

"In vain, Agnes—in vain!" he exclaimed; "I cannot desert my comrades. They have toiled for me, fought for me, bled for me. I am bound to them by a solemn oath—an oath of deadly import! In vain, in vain, poor girl; you know not what you ask."

"Oh! that ever I was born!" exclaimed Agnes, springing wildly from her seat and pressing her hands upon her brow. "My brain turns! I shall go mad! Hear me—if in that heart of thine one spark of feeling lingers—hear me, and tremble! Either comply with my proposal or release me from thy thraldom, or I swear to thee that I will destroy myself. From this very hour, not one morsel of food shall pass these lips! I will perish inchmeal before thine eyes, and in the pangs of death my latest words shall tell thee 'Thou hast murdered me!'"

"But my oath—my oath!" faltered Klieber.

"Thy oath! Wouldst thou then rather sacrifice thy wife than break a compact with miscreants? What was the object of thy oath? That thou shouldst lead them on to rapine, murder, and desolation. Can such a pledge be held sacred? I tell thee, no. To violate such an oath is virtue—to keep it unbroken, villany! Oh! pause, I beseech thee, ere it be too late. See, I throw myself on thy breast—I press my heart against thine! Thou mayst feel it wildly throbbing, and 'twill burst if thou dost scorn me. Leopold Klieber, by the love which thou hast professed for me—by the wrongs which thou hast done me—by the peace which thou hast broken—by the memories of thy sinless childhood, and by all thy hopes of mercy, I conjure thee to grant my prayer!"

A violent struggle agitated the robber's breast; but it was not of long duration. He looked upon the pale but beautiful face of his wife, upturned to him in agony, and as he gazed, his iron heart melted at length within him.

"Thou hast conquered, Agnes!" he exclaimed, pressing his lips to her forehead—"thou hast conquered, and I yield. When the sun of to-morrow shall rise, we will quit this country for ever. I will fly with thee to a distant land, and there, perchance, amid other scenes, and in thy arms, a glimpse of happiness may yet be mine!"

IV.

Lay hold upon him; if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.—*Othello.*

THE necessities of our tale require us now to return to a personage who has yet figured but slightly therein—the robber Wolfort, who, it will be remembered, on parting from Klieber in the forest, received an injunction to "rejoin his comrades in the cave."

Wolfort looked after the retreating form of Klieber till the latter, with his lovely burden, was lost entirely to view; and then, turning

thoughtfully on his heel, he struck into a path, which, after many intricate windings, terminated at the base of a very high hill.

The next instant a man, armed with a carbine, sprang from an adjoining thicket, and demanded "Who goes there?"

"In the name of Leopold Klieber!" returned Wolfort, promptly.

"Hans Wolfort? All right. Enter."

The sentinel returned to his hiding-place. Wolfort, stooping to the ground, thrust aside the brushwood, and a heavy wooden trap-door was revealed to his gaze. This he raised, and descending without hesitation a steep flight of stone steps, found himself in a wide excavation, or subterranean cavern of vast dimensions, hewn under the mountain.

The place was lighted by a single lamp, which was suspended from the centre of the roof, and consequently the extreme end of the cavern was enveloped in gloom, the light not penetrating so far. The walls were decorated with a gleaming array of muskets, carbines, pistols, pikes, and every description of warlike weapons; and upon the floor, sitting or reclining in various attitudes of reckless ease, were about fifty men, with swarthy features and stalwart frames, and dressed in a variety of costumes. They were carousing; and, to judge from the loudness of their mirth and the license of their tongues, had been drinking somewhat deeply. As Wolfort entered, they were lustily chorusing some verses of a ballad, which ran somewhat to the following purport:

When the shades of night have clos'd around,
And the northern blast blows free,
Like the wild brute from his lair, we bound,
And haste to the greenwood tree.

And then for the traveller's step we list,
And quietly bar his path,
Then rifle his pockets, and if he resist,
Cool with a bullet his wrath!

The outcasts of the world are we,
Who its wrongs and its buffets have borne,
But we care not a curse for its tyranny,
And its rights and its laws we scorn!

Then here's health to the man whose red right hand
Is deepest dyed in blood;
And here's joy and success to each robber-band
On mountain, field, or flood!

"Bravo! bravo!" cried Wolfort, as the song was concluded. "Truly, gentlemen, there is much music in your voices, though somewhat of the bass kind. One knows not whether most to compare them to the bellowing of a mountain bull or the growling of a Polar bear. But on the whole 'twas very good!—very good indeed!—exceedingly melodious!"

And having uttered this very equivocal compliment, Wolfort threw himself carelessly upon the ground, and raising a goblet of Rhenish to his lips, emptied it at a draught.

"A truce to thy currish wit, Hans Wolfort," said one of the robbers; "tell us, man, how hast thou left the captain? Where is he now?"

"That were hard to say, worthy Max," replied Wolfort, "seeing that he did not confide to me the nature of his journey; he told me, how-

ever, that he should be here again in the morning; and as he had a lady with him, as beautiful a young creature as ever looked upon the light, I doubt not that he intends to pass a merry night at the cottage of old Martin Claus."

"The baron's daughter, for a thousand dollars!" cried another of the men.

"Thou hast guessed right, Von Hallé," returned Wolfort; "I have seen her before, when she was out a-hunting with her father, and I knew her again directly, for she has a face and form not easily forgotten."

"So our captain, then, has succeeded in his project of gaining a wife?" said Von Hallé.

"He has; but no thanks to thee, Caspar, for the same. I shrewdly suspect thy blunder in letting the Wurtemberg count escape thee has much deranged some of the captain's plans."

"I'm sorry for it," returned Von Hallé; "but who'd have thought he could give us the slip so cunningly? I did but leave him for an hour or so one night, guarded by my fellows, in the ruins of an old abbey, while I went to take a friendly cup with mine host of the Dragon at Eppingen, and lo! when I return, my rascals have fallen asleep and let him escape; and though I followed on his track all the way hither, he contrived to keep the start of us. I'm glad that Klieber has jockeyed him, though. What ho! my merry men all, fill high your goblets—fill 'em to the brim! Here's a health to our captain's bride!"

The freebooters, one and all, readily responded to the toast; and the revel, thus resumed with a new zest, was kept up for the next two hours with unabated vigour.

At the end of that time it received an interruption from the sudden appearance of the robber who had been placed as sentry to guard the entrance to the cave.

"How now, Herman?" cried Von Hallé, as he entered. "Why have you left your post? You have yet another hour to watch. Anything amiss?"

"Why, yes," replied Herman, "there is something more than usual in the wind, I guess. As I was lying snug in my lair just now, I heard footsteps approaching the cave, and springing from my concealment, found myself face to face with a young lad, whom I knew at a glance to be the son of Fritz Demberg, the woodcutter. 'Whom do you seek, my lad?' said I. 'Caspar von Hallé,' he answered. 'What do you want with him?' said I; 'leave your message with me, and I will deliver it.' 'Give him that letter then,' said he; and thrusting this crumpled paper into my hand, he bounded away, and was out of sight in an instant."

Von Hallé took the letter, opened it, and essayed to read it; but having just reached that stage of drunkenness when the visual organs begin to lose their power of concentration, he found this no easy matter.

"Devil take it!" he exclaimed, "'tis the strangest epistle I ever set eyes on. The letters seem to be all dancing about like lobsters in the boiling kettle! Read it for me, Wolfort, wilt thou?"

Wolfort was unable to read, but not choosing to confess his ignorance, he took the letter, and stared at it for some moments with great gravity.

"Truly a most singular-looking billet," he said at length; "I can make nothing of it. Here, you Karl Ribnitz, you are a scholar, come and try your skill."

A handsome but dissipated young man, whose mien denoted him to have been of a higher condition than the major part of the freebooters, advanced from the further end of the cavern, where he had been sitting, and took the mysterious epistle from Wolfort's hands.

"Ha! ha!" he cried, laughing loudly; "you can make nothing of it, say you, Hans Wolfort? Why no, man, how should you, when you have been holding it upside down?"

A general laugh followed this announcement, much to Wolfort's discomfiture, who exclaimed sharply: "Read, man, read!—don't stand grinning there."

And Karl Ribnitz, thus adjured, read as follows:

"CASPAR VON HALLÉ,—The love and good-will I bear to thee and the rest of thy gallant comrades, is the motive of my writing this, which I am able to send to thee by means of Demberg the woodcutter's son, who lives close at hand. Your captain is now located at my humble abode, where he is planning, in the arms of his new-found bride, the violation of his oath of allegiance, and his own escape to another land! You will start at this, but I swear to you it is true. Hearing a loud altercation between him and the young woman, I took the liberty of listening at the door, and distinctly overheard him swear, in answer to her solicitations, that he would fly with her at daybreak, and forsake this country, and the band, for ever!

"Be warned in time, and act promptly, or ere to-morrow's dawn you will be leaderless; and you know full well, that without the genius of Leopold Klieber, ye will not hold together a week.

"Thy friend and well-wisher,

"MARTIN CLAUS."

A general silence followed the reading of this startling communication; but it was only momentary, for the next instant several voices speaking at once exclaimed—"'Tis all a lie! I'll not believe the captain would desert us!"

"Silence!" shouted Von Hallé fiercely; "ye know not what ye say, fools! I'll wager my broadsword, carbine, and dagger (which is all the wealth I have in the world), that there's not one word of falsehood in that letter. I know better than any of you the motives of the writer. For years, old Martin Claus has been constantly urging Klieber to put in execution a certain oath of vengeance on a nobleman in this neighbourhood, in which both are equally interested. Klieber has hitherto hesitated, for want of a favourable opportunity, or other reasons best known to himself; and old Martin, fearing that this hope of revenge, which has become as the breath of life to him, will be lost for ever by Klieber's defection, sends us warning of that design, in the hope that we shall prevent it."

"And prevent it we must," said Wolfort, "or 'tis all up with our future prospects."

"Think you so?" rejoined Von Hallé, with a sneer. "You may be

right, or you may be wrong, Hans Wolfort; 'tis like enough there may be some other amongst this band of gallant fellows as well capable of taking the lead as the traitor Leopold Klieber!"

"Meaning thyself, most valiant Caspar," cried Wolfort, with an ironical laugh. "Truly thy skill and conduct have shown themselves most brightly of late. Witness the affair of the Wurtemberg count!—ha! ha! No, worthy Caspar, our common sense must be at a very low ebb indeed when we choose thee for a leader!"

"Dog!" roared Von Hallé, "thou shalt repent this insult!"

And fiercely brandishing his sword, he was about to rush upon Wolfort, when Karl Ribnitz and two or three others interposed, and wrested the blade from his hand.

"Pshaw, man!" said Wolfort, coolly, "is't a time for brawling amongst ourselves, when the safety—the very existence of the band is at stake? Hear me! How many times have we, acting on our own responsibility, got ourselves into scrapes from which the genius of Klieber alone has been able to rescue us? Remember the time when Max Ravenstein there was carried before the beaks at Heidelberg, and condemned to be broken on the wheel. Was it not Klieber that devised a plan worthy of Turenne, for setting fire to the prison in the dead of night, and carrying off our comrade in triumph through the streets, under the very noses of the burghers? And was it not all done as he planned it? Remember, too, the battle with the dragoons near Carlsrühe; who does not see that it was the glorious generalship and cool presence of mind of Klieber alone that brought us off victorious against such odds, and with only the loss of two men? I tell you, we cannot do without him; nor is there one among us worthy to take his place. He is no common man!"

"Ay, ay, I believe thou'rt right," said Von Hallé, sullenly. "'Tis plain we cannot let him go."

"Ay, he's right! Wolfort's right!" shouted several of the band; "but what shall we do?"

"March to the cottage of Claus, and bring back the traitor in irons!" exclaimed Von Hallé.

"Agreed! agreed!" responded the robbers.

"Hold!" cried Wolfort, authoritatively; "of what avail would that be? Think ye the spirit of Leopold Klieber is to be conquered by chains and a dungeon? Think ye he is the man to be bullied into acquiescence by those he has been accustomed to command? No, no; we must pursue a very different tack. Listen to me; I have a plan which will set all to rights again."

"Speak it! speak it, Wolfort!" cried several voices at once.

"Well then, it is this. We must secretly give notice of Klieber's whereabouts to the police authorities. He will be seized, carried off to Darmstadt, tried and condemned before many days have flown over his head. Then must we muster our whole force the night before his execution, attack the prison in which he is confined, or rescue him at the point of the sword as he is taken to the place of execution; and having brought him off at the risk of our lives, and carried him to a place of safety, we must address him thus:—'Now, Captain Klieber, thou didst intend to desert us for ever—thou didst imagine thou no longer needed us—that thou couldst do without those brave hearts who were devoted to thee!

Art thou now convinced of thy error?' I know the captain. Fire and fury! he will embrace us all as brothers!—he will call us, with tears in his eyes, his friends, comrades, deliverers! He will grasp his sword again as a child would a favourite toy—he will swear a new oath of alliance to atone for the wrong he has done us—and all will go on as before?'

"Bravo! bravissimo!" shouted the robbers with one voice, for they relished the plan amazingly. It was bold, startling, and difficult, and therefore congenial to spirits who breathed always an atmosphere of peril, and to whom enterprise was the food of life. They had been so long inured to hardships and accustomed to success in all they undertook, that none of them doubted for one moment their ability to perform every tittle of Wolfort's dangerous design.

The question next to be considered was how to put in execution the first part of the plan—that of making Klieber's situation known to the proper authorities—which it was necessary to do without a moment's delay. At length Von Hallé hit upon the following expedient.

"Let one of us," he said, "go to the Baron Falkenberg, whose daughter Klieber has carried off, and reveal to him the whereabouts of his wronger. Fired with the hope of revenge, he will at once set off, with a band of retainers, to the cottage of Martin Claus, recover his daughter, and send Klieber under escort to one of the nearest towns. Thus the captain will not know that we had a hand in his capture."

"Agreed. It will do," said Wolfort. "But who is to undertake the office of ambassador to the baron?"

"That will I," replied Von Hallé, "as the proposal came from me. And I will set out at once. Bring me a bucket of water, some of you."

His request was complied with, and having drank about a pint and a half of the pure beverage, he plunged his head into the pail up to the shoulders. Having thus sobered himself, he next examined the priming of his pistols, and concealed them in the bosom of his doublet; and then loosening his sword in its sheath, and bringing the hilt round to be nearer to his hand, donned his hat and cloak, and said, as he turned to depart:

"If I return not in an hour you will know that I have failed in my purpose, and am probably a prisoner in the castle, and must take your measures accordingly. Farewell!"

And thereupon he quitted the cavern.

The guests who filled the Castle of Falkenberg had retired to the apartments assigned them, after returning from the fruitless search to retake the robber and his prize. The baron himself and the Count of Lindorf had not, however, followed the example of the others, but were seated together in the great hall, late the scene of so much revelry, conferring on the events of the night, and the measures to be adopted to remedy them. They were disturbed by the entrance of a lacquey, who stated that a stranger had applied for admittance at the castle-gate, saying that he had tidings of the utmost importance to communicate to the baron.

"Admit him," said the old nobleman. And shortly afterwards Von Hallé stood before him.

"Well, your business?" inquired the baron.

"I bring intelligence of your daughter," replied the new comer.

His face was muffled in his cloak, which with the slouched, broad-leaved hat he wore, contrived to disguise his features; but the moment he spoke, Count Lindorf sprang to his feet and exclaimed:

"I know that voice. This is the robber who carried me off from the inn of the Black Eagle, and kept me prisoner in the forest."

"Ha!" exclaimed the baron.

Von Hallé instinctively clutched the hilt of his sword.

"Be not too hasty, my lord," he cried, as the old nobleman laid his hand upon the bell. "If you offer me any harm, you will lose the only chance you have of recovering your daughter!"

The baron hesitated.

"Let us hear his story," said Count Lindorf. "Speak, fellow, and be brief."

Taking advantage of this permission, Von Hallé resumed:

"I have said that I can give you tidings of your daughter, Baron Falkenberg, and furnish you with the means of rescuing her at once from him in whose power she has fallen; but before I do so, you must promise me, on the honour of a nobleman, that no violence shall be done me, but that I shall have full permission to depart as soon as my tale is told. Otherwise, not one word of what you desire to learn shall pass my lips."

The baron again hesitated, and conferred in a whisper with the count.

"Decide at once," said the robber, coolly; "within two hours your daughter will be beyond your reach."

"Speak," said the baron, whose paternal affection triumphed over every other consideration; "you have my word for your safety."

"And freedom?"

"Yes."

"Then," said Von Hallé, reassured, "thus it is: About six miles from here, on the eastern side of the castle, there is, in the forest, a cottage, belonging to an old woodman of the name Martin Claus——"

The baron turned pale.

"I think you know the man, my lord baron?" continued Von Hallé, calmly. "Well, collect your servants without a moment's delay, arm them, and proceed to the cottage under cover of the darkness, and there you will find Leopold Klieber in the arms of his lovely young bride. Your servant, baron—yours, Count Lindorf!" And he turned to depart.

"Stay!" cried the baron. "This is not enough. I must question further. How am I to know that this is not some snare for me? What object can you have in coming here to impart this intelligence?"

"The question is natural, my lord, and I can satisfy it. Know, then, that Leopold Klieber contemplates an escape to another land, taking your daughter with him. He intends to set off at daybreak; but notice of his intention having, by means he little dreams of, reached the band he commanded (and of which I have the honour to be a member), we resolved to baffle his design, and be revenged upon him for his perfidy. You will understand the meaning of my embassy now. We betrayed not him till he betrayed us. And now I claim your promise."

"Go," said the baron; "and mend your evil life."

"And harkee, fellow," added Count Lindorf, "never cross my path

again, or I shall call to mind the ill you have done me, and hand you over to justice!"

Von Hallé replied only by an ironical smile and a bow of mock humility, and stalked deliberately from the room.

In a few minutes the inmates of the castle were roused from their slumbers, and assembled once more in the great hall; and the baron having in a few words explained to them the nature of the enterprise to be undertaken, and the necessity for immediate despatch, the guests readily armed themselves and their attendants; and the usual retainers of the castle being likewise supplied with weapons, a party of between forty and fifty men, well equipped and mounted, were speedily gathered together in the court-yard.

The baron divided them into three bodies: one to proceed direct to the cottage by the nearest way, the other two to take more circuitous routes to the right and left, and advance more rapidly, so as to arrive at the spot at the same time as the first troop, and thus form a cordon round that part of the forest which contained the cottage, and preclude the possibility of escape.

The plan was successful. It wanted nearly two hours of daybreak when the expedition set forth from the castle; and just as the first faint streak of red in the eastern heaven announced the uprising of the sun, the three parties met at the rendezvous.

That which proved fatal to Samson and to Marc Antony was scarcely less pernicious to Leopold Klieber. Lulled into false security by the soft delights of love, he had hardly time to spring from his couch before the door of the apartment was burst open; and ere he could use his weapons he was a prisoner in the grasp of a dozen strong men, and heard the voice of Baron Falkenberg exclaiming:

"Bind him and bear him forth, but dare not to lay a finger on my child!"

The next instant, an old man with white locks, who had been thrust aside unnoticed by the followers of the baron in the first rush into the dwelling, made his way up to that nobleman's side, and shrieking in a voice inarticulate with passion,

"This to thy heart, villain! Remember Ursula Claus!" struck at him with a dagger.

The action had been foreseen, however, by Count Lindorf, who caught hold of the intended assassin's arm as it was descending; and one of the baron's attendants, yielding to the impulse of the moment, passed his sword through the old man's body.

Martin Claus fixed his glazing eyes upon the baron with a wild and ghastly stare, and then falling heavily to the floor, expired without a groan.

AN UNFORTUNATE DAY.

BY "KINGSTON."

Some men have at intervals an unlucky day. An unlucky day is generally ushered in by a fit of sneezing whilst you are busy with the razor, or commences by your sleeping until ten o'clock when you ought to have been in the city at nine. Sceptical philosophers may talk as they will about a bias being given to the mind throughout the day, by any unpleasant occurrence taking place in the morning, whereby ill-humour is engendered, and peevishness bred, but *I* say, sir, that an unlucky day is one of those terrible mysteries which, in spite of scientific research, will ever continue to baffle the speculations of the most profound of philosophers.

I love a ghost story—and have seen a ghost; I love a love story—and have been a lover; but as I hate an unfortunate story, and have one to tell, I think I cannot vent my spleen in a better manner than by imitating the example of Chateaubriand and Lord Byron, and boring the public with a recapitulation of my sorrows. The world likes to read the history of a persecuted man; so, to use the words of the Earl of Chesterfield, "the world is taken by the outside of things, and we must take the world as it is; you or I cannot set it right."

Dear reader, may I venture to inquire, with Thomas Hood,

> Was your face ever sent to the housemaid to scrub?
> Have you ever felt huckaback soften'd with sand?
> Had you ever your nose swell'd up to a snub,
> And your eyes knuckled out with the back of the hand?

Did you ever strike the corn on the side of your little toe against the leg of a table, or touch your comical bone when you leaned your head upon your hand, and tried to look interesting? or did you ever leave home without a pocket-handkerchief with a cold in a rampant state, or sit upon a baby, or nurse one, or, in short, do anything, or suffer anything very unpleasant and incompatible with your dignity as a gentleman? because if you can recollect any such little accident befalling you, I know you will at once sympathise with me when I tell you that on a certain day in the present year *I shaved with a blunt razor.* Perhaps you will say, "Well, sir, and what then?" Everything! dear reader, for as Napoleon once lost a battle from an attack of indigestion, so in like manner I lost a day's skirmish in the battle of life from shaving with a blunt razor. The following extract from my diary will make the world acquainted with my manifold sufferings.

Nine o'Clock, A.M.—Came down stairs to breakfast, chin as raw as a beefsteak; slavey overslept herself, and breakfast not nearly ready. How I detest servants! they are always oversleeping themselves, or decamping with your jewels, or introducing the small-pox and the policeman into the house.

Mary Anne brought little Bobby in to breakfast—a thing she knows I detest. Women really have no thought for a man's comfort. "Mary Anne, my dear," said I, "that child will only upset the cups, or burn

his hands against the coffee-pot; why, then, will you persist in bringing him into the room ?"

I need not say that this innocent remark brought down on my paternal head the reproaches of an outraged female, and that female the mother of the cherubic little Bobby. "What had *he* done that he might not remain in the room, the dear little moppett; bless his little legs then, he *should* kick if he liked, the little duckling, and never mind if naughty papa *was* cross," &c., &c.

So I gave up in despair, as every well-regulated husband ought to do; and bitterly did I rue the moment of weakness which caused my soul to falter in her high resolves.

Breakfast at last! "Thank Heaven for all things," I exclaimed, by way of pious ejaculation and grace at the same time. "Now, my dear, do be quick, and let me be off!"

My wife handed me my cup, and then placing Bobby in his little chair, and calling my attention to the fact that he was the very image of his dear old papa, exclaimed, "Oh, before you go, my dear, will you please leave me some money? I want to go shopping this morning."

Now nothing to my mind is worse policy than being stingy with your wife. A good wife will never ask you for what is unnecessary and you cannot afford; and if you have a bad wife, it is your own fault; and besides, you can't help yourself, for if she wants it she will have it.

Therefore it was that I laid a ten-pound Bank of England note on the table, and was told with a very pretty smile (quite worth the dirty money) that it was more than enough. Breakfast ended, I prepared to go out, just observing to Mary Anne that she had better put the money in her purse or it would be getting lost.

"Bless me, Robert," she exclaimed, after a fruitless search, "where *can* it be?"

"I laid it by the sugar-basin, and it must be on the table, or somewhere about." (So it was, and no mistake.)

"Well, I cannot find it; you must have put it in your pocket again."

"No, I am certain I have not. Just look at that child, Mary Anne, he's been eating something he ought not."

A shriek of anguish from Master Bobby, and a silent look of horror from my wife proclaimed the fact. Pity me, oh, my friends! the little wretch had chewed the ten-pound note into a pulp.

So, with a heavy heart, I replaced the amount, and as I crossed the threshold of my "castle," I murmured to myself, "How truly Lord Bacon remarks that 'he that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune.'"

TWELVE O'CLOCK, NOON.—Smith's bill returned dishonoured. That smiling villain swore by his household gods, that if I would just do him *this* favour, he would meet it like a man, and never ask for another. Surely, surely, the whole world is of the family of Smith.

I always lend to a professed borrower, and believe me that it is the cheapest plan (only do it in moderation, and never go beyond a pound or two), for it is ten to one you ever get repaid, and the loan acts as a stopper on your friend's mouth, for as long as he owes you any money, depend upon it that he will carefully avoid your society.

TWO O'CLOCK, P.M.—The Honourable Richard Smiffel and Lord

Fiddle de Dee, accompanied by my friend Charley Manners, called to solicit the favour of my vote and interest at the ensuing election, also to beg of me to become the chairman at a neighbouring committee-room.

"Bedad, sir!" exclaimed the Honourable Dick, "you *must* come and give us a lift; hang it, we can't do without you. Bedad, sir, times are so changed that there's no polling a dead man now; no, bedad there isn't, is there, Fiddle?"

His lordship declared the thing to be quite out of the question, and, in fact, to be "now gow, as, demmee, a set of bleggardly reskels were always raving about reform, and that sort of thing, you know; and making dem'd unpleasant laws about bribery and that sort of thing, you know; and, demmee, it ought to be stopped."

I assured his lordship that I would exert myself to the utmost in the good cause, and expressed myself highly honoured by the early call I had received. (I must confess I venerate the aristocracy.)

Now, had this been all I had to relate, I should not have wasted pens and ink in the narration; but when I think on what followed, and what that unfortunate chairmanship led me into, I am ready to hide my diminished head, and exclaim with the poet,

> Blest he who, undistinguished from the crowd
> By wealth or dignity, who dwells secure."

Hardly had his lordship and the Honourable Dick retired, than in rushed a messenger from the committee-room, bearing a note, of which the following is a copy:

"Half-past Two, Friday Afternoon.

"DEAR BOB,—As you are now the chairman of this district, I feel it my duty to report to you that I have received a private and confidential communication to the effect that the opposite candidates are bribing to a great extent, and that a low public-house near your office (sign of the 'Red Lion'—you know the place) is set apart for the purpose of making the payments. I am informed that the chink of money was heard at the window not ten minutes since. In case we are beaten, a petition on the score of bribery would be a good move (our fellows having no cash, so of course we are purity men). Don't you think you had better go and see for yourself?

"Yours, truly,

"CHARLES MANNERS."

THREE O'CLOCK, P.M.—After revolving the matter in my mind, determined to act on Charley's advice, and so be able to speak confidently in case of a petition; so, with mysterious steps, I wended my way to the Red Lion. It certainly *looked* a suspicious house, and the lion over the door seemed to wink and blink at me in a derisive way, as much as to say, "*I* know all about it, but don't you wish you may find it out?"

I walked slowly past the parlour window, and distinctly heard the sound of money; so, trembling with agitation, I slipped into the dram-shop, and ordered a glass of brandy. The parlour door was at my left hand, so I contrived to push it open with my foot, and although it was instantly re-closed, I saw sufficient to prove that bribery was being carried on within.

How was I to act? If I returned to procure more witnesses, I might arrive too late, and, on the other hand, if I burst in upon them, I might be half-killed. I drank the brandy, which raised my spirits a little (I didn't mean that for a pun, upon my honour), and listened attentively to the following conversation:

"Now, then, who comes next?"

"John Smith."

"How much?"

"One pound five."

"Here's the money; now, then, come on again."

"Six gins and four screws of baccy," roared out a gruff voice; and as the waiter opened the door to execute the order, I entered with him, and stood before the bribers and the bribed.

"Now, then, I've caught you," said I.

"Turn that cove out," yelled a little man with a bass voice.

"Now come, I say, start the waggon," exclaimed a fierce-looking man, who evidently had charge of the door.

"No," said I, firmly; "I will not stir from this spot until I have obtained the name and residence of every person in this room. Recollect, you will hear of this in another place; several of you are known to me, and I call upon the waiter to notice that there is a pile of gold and silver on the table, and that that money was being paid when I entered this room."

"Pile of gold and silver, sir! yes, sir!" returned the waiter, with a look of surprise; "think you've got to the wrong house, sir."

"Yes, it's Bedlam he wants," hinted a dirty-looking man on my right.

"Don't be impertinent, sir," I replied. "You will find the best course to pursue will be to keep a civil tongue in your head."

"Well, gents," said the individual who was presiding over the cash, "I moves that we turns that chap out; we ain't a-going to sit here and be insulted, I hopes; so, you Sam and Joe, jist give him a lift into the street; bizzniss ain't to be interrupted in this here way."

Before I could place myself in an attitude of defence, I was collared, and forced out of the room, the violence of the ejection sending me through the dram-shop into the street, where I was brought up by a policeman, who had been attracted to the spot by the noise and scuffle.

"Now, then, governor, what's the row?" was his elegant salutation.

"Are you going to stand by and see me murdered by a pack of ruffians?" I inquired, with some warmth.

"Who's murdering you? Tell me all about it—how did it begin?"

"I went into that room," I replied, "for a purpose which was strictly legal, and was forcibly expelled in the manner you have seen."

"Are you a member of that club?"

"What club?"

"What club! why *that* club?"

"I know of no club; all I know is that those men are receiving bribes for their votes, and if there is law in England they shall smart for it."

"Gammon," returned the policeman; "it's the Grand Lodge of the Ancient Order of Antediluvian Buffaloes, and they're paying out the loans, that's all."

"Do you mean to tell me that's true?" I gasped.

"Fact, sir," said the officer; and I saw he was bursting with laughter.

"A nice mess I have made," said I to myself, as I retraced my steps. "To-morrow this affair will be all over the parish, and a pretty laughing-stock I shall be."

All of which came true to the letter, for my friends call me Buffalo Bob to this very day; and I, adopting the saying of Apelles, exclaim with that illustrious painter, "Ne sutor ultra crepidam."

FOUR O'CLOCK, P.M.—Having to transact a little business at Blackwall, proceeded to Fenchurch-street, and took a third-class ticket, thereby saving a trifle, and making Master Robert's breakfast rather less expensive. Besides, it is becoming quite fashionable to travel third-class, for you see so many "gents" have a notion that the first-class is "the thing," that a gentleman who patronises them may actually meet his barber face to face in the same carriage.

Mem.—Always to ride in the middle compartment of a carriage, for in case of an accident there are four partitions to be smashed before your bones can be broken. (How comfortable is the reflection to a well-regulated mind!)

"A charming day, sir," observed the only occupant of the carriage besides myself, and who evidently was a clergyman.

"Beautiful day—very."

"Nice weather for the harvest, sir."

"Very, sir—remarkably fine."

There is nothing strange in the habit Englishmen have of commencing their conversations with remarks about the weather. Local taxes and rainy, foggy days, do much towards shortening a man's life. An unfavourable day in London sweeps into the grave a multitude of persons who otherwise would live, and causes thousands to be ill-tempered who otherwise would be amiable. A real cloudless fine day produces more happiness throughout Great Britain, Ireland, and Berwick-on-Tweed than the abolition of the income-tax, the destruction of Cronstadt, or the passing of that famous bill for "giving everybody everything," could possibly do.

Marvel not, then, that the stout, gentlemanly, spectacled, white-cravated gentleman and myself commenced a highly interesting conversation with the unimportant words, "A charming day, sir."

The reverend stranger and I agreed upon every point we discussed. He was a man after my own heart. He swore by "Derby, Dizzy, and glory (as *Punch* said or sung), admired Dr. Cumming, went into ecstasies at the very mention of Dr. Croly, abused Dr. Wiseman, and mourned over Messrs. Newman and Pusey. He was, in short, a perfect gentleman, and I was just feeling for my card-case in order to exchange "pasteboards" with him, when the train stopped, and, with a clerical bow, he vanished.

FIVE O'CLOCK, P.M.—Having transacted my business to my satisfaction, and come to the conclusion that, in spite of my adventure at the Red Lion, I was doing a "roaring" trade, I proceeded to an hotel and ordered a modest dinner of chops and sherry, my ten-pound loss making me very frugal.

Having finished my modest meal, I called the waiter, and inquired the cost thereof.

"Two chops, one bread, potatoes, and half-pint of sherry—three-and-three, sir."

"Three-and-three and threepence for you makes three-and-six, eh, waiter? Very well; can you change me a sovereign? Why bless my life, where is it?—*con*found it—why, where the dickens—good gracious, waiter, where *is* my purse?"

"Purse, sir—don't know, sir," and he looked into the decanter, apparently with the insane hope of finding it there.

I looked in my hat, felt in my boots (why, I'm sure I cannot tell), but my search was as bootless as a mud-larker, and the emptiness of my hat was a disappointment that was felt; so, as a last resource, I gasped out, "Waiter, I've lost my purse."

"Sorry for it, sir—better see the polis, sir."

"I know I had it in the train," I returned, "and there was no one in the carriage but a clergyman" ("and a real gentleman in black he must be," I added mentally).

"Very okkerd thing, sir."

This was a truism I could not offer any reasonable objection to, therefore I assented thereto with a grim smile, at the same time offering my gold watch and guard as a deposit, which the waiter accepted, advancing me a sovereign to pay my expenses home, and pay a little account I owed in the city.

Certainly that was one way of getting a dinner on *tick*. I said nothing about my loss to my better half, for fear of a curtain lecture; but ever since I have eschewed the unintroduced society of orthodox clergymen.

Half-past Six, P.M.—Called at a photographer's in the Strand for a portrait of myself, which I had sat for the day before, having promised Mary Anne a likeness of her bosom's lord for some months past. I should have thought that Master Bobby would have satisfied her, "being a perfect image of his papa" (at least, so Mrs. Glubb, the nurse, said); but, however, the expense being only fifteen shillings, I paid the money cheerfully, and pocketed the photograph, which was neatly wrapped up, and taking a bus to St. John's-wood, soon arrived at my "castle."

Eight o'Clock, P.M.—"Now, my dear," said I, as my wife poured me out a cup of tea (our little cherub being in bed), "I have a little present for you." And I placed the parcel in her hands (I must say that I should have liked to have had a peep before I showed her it, but really my numerous misfortunes quite drove it out of my head).

"Oh, it *was* a duck," said she; "oh, it was *so* like me; and to think of her pet going and having his hair curled, to make him look nice—but, dear me, Robert," she continued, "what on earth are those two little lumps on your front curl?"

"Lumps, my love!" I replied; "I assure you I have no lumps on my hair, whatever may be the number of phrenological bumps I have on my head."

I took the portrait, and holding it to the lamp, beheld (oh, ye gods and little fishes, it was too bad!) the apparition of two flies perched just above my left eyebrow, and apparently feeding upon the Macassar oil where-

withal my head had been anointed. Ah, well—it's my usual luck! I suppose that a photographer is like a Sunday-school superintendent, when he invites the children to tea expects every one to bring his own "mug," but really it is a shade too bad to be surmounted by two flies rampant in this style. I wonder he did not charge for their portraits too. Who knows but that he has two flies trained to hop into his patrons' heads, and glare as those two are doing, with romance-killing energy over the sitter's favourite curl. I must give him credit for the idea, if my surmise is correct, for of course every one so ornamented would be obliged to do as I shall have to do in the morning—go and sit for another. Those flies have cost me seven shillings and sixpence each.

Certain persons of unbelieving minds may, after perusing the following record, exclaim, in the language of the Koran (see the chapter entitled "Hud," revealed at Mecca), "Oh, Hud, thou hast brought us no proof of what thou sayest, neither do we believe thee,"—therefore I have obtained a written apology for the insult I now am about to record, which may be viewed on application to the Editor for the writer's address.

ELEVEN O'CLOCK, P. M.—Feeling tired and sleepy, suggested to Mary Anne that it was time to retire. Took the bed-candle and went my nightly rounds. As usual the kitchen clock was unwound, the back-door unfastened, and the front window unbarred. Bah! all servants are alike; they do very well the month they are on trial, but after that happy period has expired, they come out in their true colours, and sacrifice their employer's interests to their love of idleness and the policeman. Ah, well! it's of no use complaining; I am awfully tired and want to stretch my legs in bed—so good night, dear reader. (I hope my wife won't miss my watch.)

TWELVE O'CLOCK, MIDNIGHT.—Comfortably coiled up in bed, listening to the tramp of the policeman and the rumble of the night cabs. Yah! I'll turn over and go to sleep; I'm sure I need it after such an unfortunate day. There, that's comfortable—now then for a snooze.

How long I had slept I know not; it might have been five minutes, and it might have been five hours; all I know is, that at some unholy hour I was aroused by a violent application of my wife's knuckles to my ribs, and a request "to get up and see who was knocking at the door."

I started out of bed and listened, and sure enough there was a most awful uproar outside.

Divesting my head of a rather unromantic nightcap, I opened the window and very naturally inquired "Who's there?"

"I'm here," said a husky voice below.

"Who are you?—what do you want?—and get away with you," I replied, in a passion.

"I don't 'tend to go home till morning, till daylight doth appear—my name's Charley Manners, and a goo' name it is."

"Go home, Charley," said I, in a soothing tone. "You know you're drunk."

"Tell you whar it is, old f'ler. If any gen'l'man says I'm drunk, I mean to say he isn't a gen'l'man. It's all ri'; Lord Fiddle sent me down to 'liver a message of ver' great 'portance. P'raps you think I'm 'tossicated, but I'm not 'tossicated; I've had nothing but lamb and green peas at Gray's Inn, and lamb and green peas won't make a f'ler drunk, will

they?—It's all ri'—come down and I'll tell you all about it. You're a jolly good f'ler, and so is that lovely creature your wife—she's a jolly good f'ler, and we're all jolly good f'lers."

"Do go down," said Mary Anne. "I'm sure Mr. Manners does not mean to insult us; poor man, he has a very weak head, and Mr. Sniffel is a great drinker, so *do* go." (So much for calling a woman a lovely creature.)

"Now then!" I exclaimed, as I opened the front door, "what do you want, Mr. Manners? Pray be quick, and do not keep me waiting in the cold, or hoax me again with a plot at the Red Lion."

"What do I want?" exclaimed the wretch. "I'll tell you 'reckly. Oh! I'll tell you what I want. But is it all ri'."

I said that, as far as I knew, it *was* all right.

"Well, then, I'll tell you all about it, as you say it's all ri'. You see I've bought a crab, and can't get any vinegar—hang me if I can—so if you'll just give me a spoonful, I shall feel jolly much obliged. It's all ri', you know; you're a jolly good f'ler, and if you ever——" The rest of his speech was lost, for I banged the door in his face, and left him to cool on the door-step.

I might fill a volume with the account of my woe and sufferings during the remainder of the night—how tooth-ache came on, and how Bobby cried—but I prefer to be silent; my griefs are too profound for utterance; as Seneca wisely says, "*Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent*"—"Light griefs may speak, deep sorrow's tongue is bound."

DO REFORMED RAKES MAKE THE BEST HUSBANDS?

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

"Do reformed rakes make the best husbands?" This, on the instant, may appear a somewhat strange, if not even an inappropriate subject for the employment of the pen of a woman—for the expansion of her secret thoughts—for the expatiation of her eloquence. Still it is by no means a novel one to the sex; and still it remains, as it hitherto has done, a matter of the merest conjecture, notwithstanding all that has been written upon it; and it may still remain a matter of the merest conjecture, notwithstanding all that I may now humbly advance towards the solution of so profound a mystery—as, in the first place, how few men are there to be met with who, having once resigned themselves complacently to the delirious inebriation of unrestrained indulgence, ever make that noble effort to overcome the enervating lassitude of vice—to conquer the indolent sluggishness of vice—to triumph over the grovelling debasement of vice—and regain that bracing and renovating state of self-restriction which is so absolutely imperative to the bare endurance of the tranquilly-monotonous course of wedded life? And, in the second place, what woman, in kind consideration of her sex, has left her experience of such an union as an unerring

guide to future experimentalists? Alas! the question is as occult as if it had never been agitated—alas! such a precious legacy is still to be bequeathed. I will, therefore, venture to assert, unassisted by aught save a judgment that wishes not willingly to mislead where so serious an amount of happiness or misery is involved, that, if a man, so entirely immersed in dissipation as to be insensible to the shame and degradation of its brutalising influence, could yet be drawn by the suasive power of virtue from the syren enchantments which so fatally delude—could yet be snatched from the maëlstrom of passion ready to engulph him—could yet be pierced by the thorns and briars so superficially concealed by the flowers strewn over the pathway of that guilt which he is so rapidly threading towards an ignominious grave—could yet be led from the darkness of sin into the light of regeneration, so as clearly and startlingly to perceive his unveiled turpitude in all its enormity—so as poignantly to feel a deep and enduring regret for the energies wasted, the talents misemployed, the mind perverted, and the body worn—there would be every probability of such a man becoming a better husband than even one whose nature was more unsophisticated, whose habits were more unexceptionable, whose character was more unblemished; for a disposition so thoroughly renewed would possess a finer intuition to confer permanent happiness on the object of its fresh and more august affection, from the various and delicate modifications which that affection would continually assume, than would even the first-fruit offering of a heart which had never been blasted by the sirocco-breath of illicit love—never been cloyed by satiety—never been sanctified by the hallowing inspiration of repentance—never been rescued from the seven-times heated furnace of licentiousness by the angel of reformation; for, as the seed dieth in the ground ere it springeth into vital beauty, to waft its fragrance up to heaven on the wings of the morning breeze, as an incense of thanksgiving for its odorous birth, so that heart which has then died unto crime would revive unto innocence, to shed the perfume of its incense of thanksgiving on the altar which enshrined the wife of its choicer selection, for the conjugal love of that heart would be as the religion of that heart. But, then, what must be the superior qualities of the woman on whom the holy fervour of that reinspired heart is to be expended? What manner of woman would be calculated to receive and appreciate the worship of such a reawakened heart? She must be one, indeed, whose vanity is under the most perfect subjection—one who combines with great firmness of will great singleness of purpose—great purity of sentiment with great control over the imagination—great forbearance with great submission—and great fortitude with great patience;—for she may still have much to annoy her, much to disappoint her, much to alarm and distress her. For the woman who engages in such an enterprise launches her fragile barque of anticipated felicity on a tempestuous sea, abounding in shoals and quicksands, without rudder and without compass, to veer hither and thither at the mercy of the winds; to sink or swim at the mercy of the waves; and to reach the appointed haven battered and dismantled. For she has to eradicate old impressions and to efface old associations—she has to counteract those subtle influences which, having been the earliest admitted to sway the yielding feelings, remain the latest and the most domineering in them; and she has to vindicate the

morality of her sex, aspersed and misconceived by the corrupting intercourse of a free and flagrant licentiousness. She, who knows nought of even traditionary evil—of even speculative impurity—she, who knows nought of the art, the astuteness, the intrigue of infamy—she, who has lived, like a violet, screened from contamination by the leaves of her own consummate chastity—how can she then effect so signal a transformation in a nature so vile and so uncongenial?—how can she hope to find a resting-place for the sole of her foot, in her weary quest for peace in that guilt-flooded heart, unless, in sooth, the immaculate memory of a mother has left one untainted spot in its dreary waste for the young bride to take her stand upon, and from thence to radiate, until that dark and dismal heart is once more wholly and intensely reillumined with the glory of rekindled beatitude? Yet this is not all; nor is this, perhaps, the most arduous part of the onerous and responsible task which occupies every faculty and engrosses every emotion; for, while she has to win confidence, she has also to guard against humiliating the self-love, which is the most tenacious of its rights, when most conscious of the higher deserts of another, and which never pardons the mortification inflicted by superiority. With what taste, then—with what delicacy—with what vigilance must she act not to wound the pride rendered additionally sensitive by internal reproach? With what tender caution must she gradually and imperceptibly proceed in her grand and glorious work!—how must she, by the undeviating example of her strictly-regulated conduct, strengthen the precepts which excite emulation and incite to good!—how must she subdue, by gentle, chaste, yet warm regard! Yet dread not, oh fair and guileless woman—tremble not for the desired result of your laudable endeavours—for while you are working for the profligate, you are also labouring for virtue; and as Heaven is invariably on its side, so will Heaven undoubtedly be on yours! For when such a man, recovering from the fever of intemperance, which prostrates more completely than the malarian blight which parches and pales the florid tide of being—and when the inertia of disgust makes his soul sicken with the faintness of that self-sorrowing which is so intolerable to endure—and when the tear of a poignant contrition rises in the abashed eye, and a despair of pardon rises in the dejected heart, he finds a pitying hand ready to dry that tear, a soothing voice ready to encourage hope to battle with and conquer that despair, a fond glad glance ready to approve that victory, and an eloquent lip ready to persuade to future similar conquests—then, oh! then, that self-condemning man, arousing as from a hideous dream (in which was too palpably prefigured the tribunal of Almighty justice), stretches forth his arms towards the seraphic vision hovering near him, to plead, as it were, his cause, and falls, with an ecstasy as acute as anguish, on the bosom which has been waiting long and sanguinely to pillow his aching and down-crushed head. And although heavy at first that guilty head may feel on that buoyant and sinless bosom, yet let it lie there—oh! let it lie there—for there is its rest—there it can collect its scattered thoughts—there it can reflect calmly and gratefully—there it can quiet its throbbings—there it can sleep—and there it can dream the dream such as Jacob dreamed in the valley of Padan-aram, when the descending and the ascending angels of

God revealed the coming favours of the Omniscient to the wandering but most protected son of Isaac. For that head is reposing on a very Beth-el for him, too; for the man does not exist—never did exist—never will exist—who could be indifferent to the affecting amelioration of a sympathy which elevates as much as it consoles—which restores self-laudation and readjusts reproving conscience—which recals courage and reproduces tranquillity—which, in fact, renders marriage that which Heaven intended marriage to be—not the evanescent inclination consequent on the admiration produced in youth by a brilliant eye and a changeful cheek, nor the more blunted deliberation of ambitious maturity for rank and fortune—but that sacred and serene affection which is to last through life, and which is to brighten all in life—the affection which is above the mutations of time or the vicissitudes of wealth or position—the affection which is based on esteem, blended with the loyalty of gratitude, for the ineffable fascination which the possession of a woman can alone bestow, who, conscious that she has "reformed a rake," has the generosity and the sublimity never to make him conscious that she has performed such an almost miracle—never to make him conscious that she is even in the slightest degree aware that she has done aught out of the common way for his advantage and for his felicity, but who silently and effectively ministers to his thorough and complete satisfaction, stealing, with a murmuring melody, like a whisper of content, on his rapt and enlightened soul, emulous herself of no higher reward than the secret approval of innate integrity—the secret transports of innate pride—the integrity which rejoices at the justice which it can revel in—the pride which exults in the love which it feels does "cast out fear"—the pride which even the most modest woman cannot suppress when contemplating, under Providence, the worth of the object in whose ultimate perfection she has so ably assisted. And she may well be proud at such a moment, for true love is alone created by an unqualified belief in the absolute perfection of the being who inspires it. And then, indeed, it is that divine exaltation of the expanding heart, which, with a regal munificence, endows and ennobles that adored object with every attribute calculated to strengthen more and more the benign and unalterable conviction that the vice which is religiously repented of reassumes a lustre which is scarcely, if at all, dimmed by comparison with the most unsullied virtue—and from that conviction results a happiness which will richly repay the risk of happiness staked, for that happiness will be confirmed by Heaven and increased by time—that happiness will never be poisoned by the one bitter ingredient of jealousy mingled with the sweets which it quaffs from the jewelled chalice of connubial joy; for, in seeking for a purer emanation, that once guilty man for ever renounced the errors which induce crime to hope in variety—a pleasure never found until the fickleness of ever-dissatisfied crime is proved to be a never-satiated appetite—hence mistrust in him must vanish with the past—hence confidence in him must appear with the future—and hence the Reformed Rake may make the Best Husband.

XV.

WILSTAN turned to the direction where he had left Ives the falconer, but finding that worthy functionary no longer there, he sauntered on, musing as to the first steps he should take; but leaving, as was natural to one of his age, the practical for the imaginative, his brain began to glance into a glorious future, fancying incidents of successful feats and a lauded career. Thus employed, he had almost reached the precincts bounding the lands whence the revenue of the convent was derived, when he came accidentally to a place where his former companion now stood, leaning on his quarter-staff in an attitude of intense attention.

"Hear you that, Sir Wilstan?" said Ives, as the other drew near. "There is a merry-making yonder, an I mistake not."

"What is it, Ives?" questioned the youth. "A wolf or fox making free with the smaller cattle of thy domain?"

"Nay. 'Tis no four-footed creature," answered the falconer. "Hark! hear you not the sound of a man's voice?"

"That do I," said Wilstan, after a pause. "And more voices than one."

"Right," rejoined Ives. "And there is more devilry here than we wot of. They speak no Saxon tongue, and it behoves us to be careful in these perilous times. We must learn more of them, and the errand they come upon, for it may affect our lady the abbess."

"Let us draw nearer," said Wilstan.

"Follow me, then, Sir Wilstan, by your good leave; for though on the field of battle Ives would be proud to carry your shield, here you must be content to learn woodcraft from one bred to it from a lad, and whose father had the knack before him."

"Lead on, then, brave Ives," replied the youth, laughing; "for once I am content to be thy obedient follower."

"The knaves are in yonder dell," continued Ives, pointing; "from whence issues the smack of a Norman speech, I could swear. But we can draw close upon them, praise be to Saint Winifred, and without their ken. Keep close to me, Sir Wilstan, and move stealthily as a cat after a young bird."

The loquacious falconer then secured his hawk to a tree bough; and followed by Wilstan moved carefully in the direction whence proceeded the sounds before mentioned. They had here to penetrate a dense mass of underwood, and in order to avoid as much as possible the crackling of the branches, they threw themselves prostrate on the ground, and in that position crept slowly and tediously along, pausing from time to time in their course to listen, lest some unlucky sound had betrayed their approach; until, fairly within ear-shot of the intruders, the two eavesdroppers cautiously rose, and peeping through an opening in the bushes, could distinctly see a party of some twenty men, whom from their dress and language they at once knew to be Normans. Both Wilstan and the falconer, however, were sufficiently acquainted with the Norman tongue

to understand what was said; and he that appeared to be the leader of the party was speaking as they came up.

"Where," he cried—"where in the fiend's name is this son of a Saxon hound? Are we to be kept waiting here all day for his blunderings?"

"It is a chance," surmised one of the men, "that he is swallowed up in one of these cursed quagmires."

"Rare justice that for a traitor," rejoined the leader. "Rare revenge where the very soil he would betray buries him."

"Yet, methinks," added another, "the soil would rather vomit than embrace him so lovingly. But traitor though he be, he is our guide, and I trust to the saints no such evil hath befallen him."

"For my part," put in the next, "I like not this journey which hath been put upon us by Fitzosborn for his own ends. He heeds not, he, whether we be slain or not. He has an hour's whim to satisfy, and a man's life is well risked, he thinks, in getting him his desire."

"I care not," said another, "an it had been to do some noble service. But merely to carry off a chitty-faced girl! Pugh! it is beneath a man to do it."

Wilstan here griped the falconer's arm so tightly, that the latter with difficulty suppressed an exclamation of pain.

"Peace, thou ass," shouted the leader of the band to the last speaker. "Did I not tell it thee as a secret? A murrain on thy tongue thus to betray it to thy fellows ere the fit time be come. However, lads, since the matter has been thus broken to you, ye shall even know all. The high and mighty seneschal, William de Fitzosborn, having conceived in his politic brain a device, requiring for its doing a man discreet, skilful, and of unquestioned bravery, showed his usual judgment and foresight in selecting my poor self for the deed; and—'Gilbert,' said he to me, 'I know thee wise as well as brave; excellent in stratagems, hardy in execution, and withal prudent in speech. Take with thee a score men—a number more than enough for one of thy skill to overcome any foolish resistance thou mayest encounter; have with thee the renegade Bertulph for a guide'—ten thousand plagues cling to him for a loiterer!—'he will bring thee to a certain convent, where thou wilt find a certain damsel named Ediva, daughter to a certain Saxon chief, whom I would have thee bring hither, for a certain reason. Do this with thy usual discretion, and Fitzosborn is for ever thy friend.'"

Another convulsive motion from amid the bushes which concealed the two listeners was here made, but fortunately passed unnoticed; and one of the band took up the word in reply to Gilbert, the leader. "Fitzosborn," he remarked, "is more sparing of his praises than to lard thy thick skin so. Beware, I pray thee, Gilbert, lest this pretty wench makes thee forget thy discretion and causeth thee folly, through thy weakness for a black eye and a rosy mouth! In that case, Fitzosborn would think it a slight thing to hang thee on the nearest tree, spite of the fair words he sugared thee with before."

Gilbert was about to make an angry reply, when he was startled by a touch upon his shoulder, and looking round, beheld a man of venomous aspect, who had drawn near to the party unobserved. This was the guide Bertulph; the same personage who has been before introduced in

these pages as the bearer to Duke William of Hereward's arrival in England after the battle of Hastings. On him Gilbert turned the tide of his wrath: "How comes it, knave," he said, pursing his lushy brows into a form which he intended to show dignified sternness—"how comes it that we be made to linger thus in the course of our affairs, and have to wait until it pleaseth you to repair your blunders?"

"By your leave, the fault was not mine," replied Bertulph, in a mixed tone of fear and sullenness. "You would not keep to the main road as I desired you."

"Deceiver that thou art," retorted the leader, "didst thou not tell us there was a shorter path by the river-side, which would cut off much from our journey?"

"Hear me——"

"Tush! thou art not worth the hearing. Have we not been, I say, stopped ever and anon in our route by water-gullies, and by marshes without end? Knave, dost thou take us for crows, that we may fly across; or frogs, to jump from rush to rush?"

"Although I said there was a shorter way, I said also it was one hard to travel, and it was much against my advice you would come by it."

"Hast thou, then," demanded Gilbert, "met no one whilst thou hast been from us, to put thee on the scent of this infernal nunnery?"

"As ill-luck would have it," replied the traitor, "not one have I met, gentle or simple; but we cannot be far from the place, and if you will follow me, I doubt not we shall soon find some mark to serve for a clue to guide us."

After some grumbling, the leader assented to the proposition, and as the party prepared to set forth, Wilstan and Ives retreated from their concealment as noiselessly, but with much more haste, than they came. To dive through a pathway, inextricable to an unexperienced eye from the masses of thick brushwood growing on every side, was the work of a moment, and hurrying on they soon stood face to face with panting breath and flushed cheeks. "Let us summon the farm men," cried the youth; "then haste to the convent and put it in a state of defence against these wretches. They shall have my life sooner than a hair of the Lady Ediva's head be touched."

"Umph! The convent walls are little adapted for defence; nor can we muster any force to withstand a score men armed from head to foot. No, Sir Wilstan, it were sheer madness to try it."

"What then shall we do?" inquired the youth, clasping his hands in his excitement.

"Fly from the place with all the speed you may with the fair lady," answered Ives. "First of all haste to my dwelling, where you will meet Sweene and old Guttorm, bid them saddle what steeds they have enow I fancy for your purpose—and meet you at the southern postern; then without delay hie you to the nunnery and tell the inmates how matters stand."

"But these villains, will they not reach the house ere we can depart?"

"Leave that to me," replied the falconer, nodding his head sagaciously. "I will lead them a pretty dance, trust me. The skulking kestrels! they shall find they have a man of wit and devices to deal with."

"I know not thy plan," said Wilstan, "but if thou art going to put them on a wrong scent, take heed to thine own neck, for if they find thou hast deceived them, it will fare hardly with thee."

"Tut! tut! no danger," the falconer assured him; then shaking the youth heartily by the hand, they took their several ways; Ives making a circuit to meet the Norman party, and Wilstan bounding towards the place where he was to meet his followers with the fleetness of a young roe-buck. Arrived there, he hastily gave directions to the astonished Sweene, whom he was fortunate enough to meet on his way; then turning in the direction of the nunnery with unabated fleetness, he soon stood panting and heated before the entrance. Applying himself with vigour to the bell, he rung a loud and long summons, at which a sliding panel was slowly withdrawn, and an imperturbable face presented itself in striking contrast to the excited looks of the youth.

"For the love of Heaven, sister Ursula," cried Wilstan, "haste, and unbar the door."

"What! Sir Wilstan," replied the portress—for such was her office—"know you not the hour of noon is at hand? Wherefore have you disturbed the meditations of the sisterhood with this unhallowed noise?"

"There is no time for parley—life and death are at stake," burst from the young man. "Let me therefore enter without more ado."

"There might be life and death at stake if I did," returned the portress. "Think you I have held this trustworthy office so long and do this folly? In these times, when bloodshed is rife, and no one knows where to lie in safety, it is not meet, I trow, to ope the gate without discretion. There may be an ambuscade—to use a term of the men-of-war—near where you stand, for aught I can tell."

"The old dotard!" muttered Wilstan; then added aloud, "At least, then, sister Ursula, haste to the lady abbess, and ask her to see me instantly."

"Have I not already told you, young man, that the lady mother is at her devotions, and must not be disturbed. Return in the space of an hour, and I will then speak to her of your coming."

"An hour! All will be lost if I linger longer," exclaimed Wilstan. "Good bell, do me this once good service." He then again applied to the rope, and continued to pull at it, until the noise brought the lady superior herself to the door.

"What can justify this rudeness?" she asked, as soon as the clangor ceased, and she had silenced the exclamations of the astounded and shocked portress. "Is it you, Sir Wilstan, whom I have held as a seemly and well-conducted youth? Fie! fie!"

"Forgive me," replied Wilstan. "The urgency of the case is my excuse, and I had no other way to gain instant audience. Gracious and holy lady, I beseech you summon the Lady Ediva, that she may prepare for flight from hence; every moment increases the peril."

"Explain yourself, young man," demanded the abbess. "What peril can Ediva suffer in this sanctuary?"

"Dear lady, stay not by questioning the preparations for departure; the whiles they are made I will narrate what we have heard."

Wilstan was accordingly admitted, and as he stood in the corridor, hurriedly informed the abbess of the intention formed by Fitzosborn to

seize on the person of Ediva. All was consternation and bustle in the convent at the news; and the many various attempts to assist the maiden's preparations for flight had the not uncommon effect of rather retarding than advancing the desired object. The abbess, however, saw the danger, and repressed their officiousness, while Githa, who possessed greater presence of mind, proceeded with tact and speed to equip her mistress. While so employed, the clatter of horses' feet without added to their alarm, and the sisterhood with an united scream closed, some about Ediva, fancying the spoilers already arrived to seize her, but the most clinging around the lady abbess for protection, when the voice of Wilstan partly reassured them.

"Fear not," he said; "the steeds you hear are those on whom we must depend for safety. Honoured lady," he added, turning to the abbess, "I have made bold to use them, and must for a time remain your debtor for them. They are brought hither now by Sweene and Guttorm, who will accompany us."

The superioress gave a ready approval to what had been done.

"But you, oh my kind protectress," cried Ediva, bathing her hand with tears, "must I leave you, and thereby bring upon you, perchance, the vengeance of these fearful men?"

"I, my child," replied the abbess, "am past the fear of man; for these"—pointing to those around—"they are God's children—He will protect both them and me."

"All, lady, is prepared—all ready," said Wilstan, anxiously.

"Stay yet one moment," rejoined the abbess; "await the blessing which, when rightly asked, never, for the delay caused by the asking, brought misfortune on the head of the receiver. Kneel, my children."

Wilstan and Ediva knelt reverently, in obedience to the mandate, whilst the widow of King Edward stretched over them her hands; her countenance assuming a loftier and almost inspired look as she bestowed her benediction on the young couple. She then imprinted a kiss on the forehead of the maiden, and giving her in Wilstan's charge, bade them depart.

Hurrying towards the postern to which Ives had directed them, in order to be screened from the view of the Norman ravishers whom he intended to mislead, they found Sweene and Guttorm mounted, with other steeds ready for Wilstan and the two females. Sweene at once dismounted and assisted Githa to her horse, while Wilstan did the same for his mistress; after which, each springing on his own, the next moment the whole party was cantering from the convent.

XVI.

On leaving Wilstan, Ives the falconer's first care was to secure Bright-Eye, and with that favourite bird on wrist, he began to put in execution the plan he had framed to delay the progress of the emissaries sent to capture the Lady Ediva. Dodging behind the thick bushes, and taking advantage of any hill-side mound which might serve to screen him from observation, he soon outstripped his intended dupes, then turned to meet them, and as he jogged along, began with great apparent unconcern to sing and whistle; until, suddenly coming upon them, he drew back with

well-feigned surprise at the rencontre, and made as though he would have retreated; seeing which, the leader of the band rushing forward, seized him by the collar.

"Not so fast, my fine fellow," he cried; "ye were not met with so easily that we may part on such quick terms. Ere thou leavest us, take us, I pray ye, to a certain nunnery in these parts named after a saint of your own Saxon growth; as though Saint Valarie or Saint Rosarie were not good enough for your island stomachs, and far better saints than any made here."

"Worthy sirs, mean you the holy house dedicated to the holy Saint Winifred?"

"Right," answered the leader—"Saint Winifred—that is the name. How far are we thence—eh? Speak the truth, Sir Knave, or thine ears shall pay the penalty."

"And wherefore should I lie?" inquired Ives, simply. "By the direct line as the crow flies you may be a league or so off; but I would advise ye to take a somewhat rounder course, as the roadways hereabouts have not been mended of late, and are at present unsafe to man or beast."

"So far!" exclaimed Gilbert; then, speaking to the renegade Bertulph, he continued: "By the mass! either thou hast played us false, or thou art as ignorant and dull to the Norman as thou art knave and traitor to thine own line."

"'Tis no fault of mine," returned the Saxon, doggedly. "You would drink and sleep on the way, when you should be stirring, and now lay the blame on me. I have done all a man could do in the guiding of ye."

"A man, indeed! a shifter to the wind rather. A dog that can smell out the safer master. A two-faced shambler while the issue of hard blows is doubtful. A sneaker and a cheat. Fie on all your conscience and morality!" burst forth from the leader, who, however, was probably more disgusted at Bertulph for not having brought him and his band to their journey's end than at his dearth of patriotic feeling. "Thine office is out of joint, and lo! we must trust thy countryman here to do that for which thou hast received thy thirty pieces of silver."

"Is this man then a Saxon and a traitor?" asked Ives.

"Ay," replied Gilbert; "one of thine own brutish race, fit only to be kicked as we would do a cur. Why, sirrah, how now! thou lookest as though thou wouldst swallow us up, steel, harness, and all."

The worthy falconer was, indeed, on the point of betraying more indignation at the discovery of his base countryman's treachery than might have consorted with his own safety; for, forgetting his diplomacy and the part he should be enacting, he was about to launch forth bitter reproaches on the head of Bertulph, when the voice of Gilbert recalled his ideas, and enabled him to recover his presence of mind.

"Worthy sir," he said, "heed not my looks. I have fits upon me, left of an old malady caused by the smell of a rotten pippin; and the visage of that worthy," pointing to Bertulph, "brought it to mind; being the nearest approach to a shrunk apple-john."

This sally caused a general laugh, bringing upon the speaker a fierce vindictive glance from the person thus complimented.

"Ay, and a sour pippin in the bargain," continued Ives, frowning the ireful look boldly.

"Come, come, Bertulph," said Gilbert, "thy face at the best would hardly tempt a fair dame's liking; and by the mass! at the present moment it might scare the foul fiend himself. Look cheerful, man; we'll have no bickerings."

"Nay, an he would bicker for a plain joke, let him," said Ives, seizing the chance of prolonging the stay of the Norman party by causing an altercation; and being by no means reluctant to wreak some personal chastisement on the craven Saxon. "Here I stand ready with my quarter-staff, and hey for him that gives the hardest knock."

"A ring, a ring!" shouted the men. "Let Saxon fight Saxon, 'twill be rare sport."

Ives nothing loth swung his weapon till it whizzed in the air, and took a step forward; but Gilbert interposed.

"Nay, nay," he cried; "fine fun would it be, I grant, for a holiday, but we have a good day's work before us yet. Lower thy staff, hawker, and show us the place where these holy lady-birds have built their nest."

Ives seeing no alternative but obedience, accordingly placed himself at the head of the party, and led the way. But never did Puck with more mischief bring unlucky wights

Thoro' bush, thoro' briar,
Thoro' water, thoro' fire,

than did their new guide lead the Normans. Along slippery and rocky paths, through low and tangled brushwood, or over deceitful swamps, where the treacherous moss seemed to promise secure footing; such was the course they had to traverse. Nor did it seldom happen that a mischance would occur through an incautious step, and the unlucky one be immersed knee-deep in bog and mire, to be extricated thence amid the jeers and laughter of his companions.

Matters went on thus for the space of nearly two hours, when Gilbert, full of vexation, and nigh spent with fatigue, exclaimed:

"Hark ye, Sir Falconer! how long, I ask ye, are we to be kept on this cursed track? If I find thou hast cozened us, thou shalt hang for it, by the bones of Saint Valarie."

"Nay, then, an you can find a better pathway do so," answered the falconer, in an offended tone. "These thanks are the reward a man gets for doing a right action. After losing your way, you would hang me for helping you find it."

"Go to," said the leader. "I have caught thee smirking and making merry at our mishaps; and I shrewdly suspect thou hast brought us through these sloughs for sheer knavery, and we might have come by a way dry and firm as the Watlinga-street. But heed thine own neck once more, I pray thee. In making a fool of me, thou mayest look more foolish still, when I pay off scores. He jests the best that laughs last."

With sundry such threatenings Gilbert continued to vent his ire, till Ives, deeming it prudent to end his deception, brought them to a point from whence they could view the walls of the nunnery at a short distance before them. Here the leader, after a few moments' consideration, nodded his head sagaciously, and muttered to himself:

"Right: I had best draw from this fellow the fact that our pretty spoil is truly caged yonder. If she be, by Saint Peter a nutshell shall not escape my vising should they try to hide her from me!" He then bade his followers fall back, and addressed the falconer: "Thine office, it seems, is that of falconer," he said. "Do the holy sisters love the sport?"

"But so-so," answered the falconer.

"But thou art, doubtless, held in high favour among them," pursued Gilbert.

"Truly I may boast of some few marks of condescension."

"And art well met in the buttery, doubtless," added Gilbert. "Ah! many a merry gossip hast thou had over thy manchet and flagon. Thou canst tell me, I warrant, some news of a daughter of Earl Hereward of Brunne—one named Lady Ediva."

"Ay; a fair lady, and one that loves to see a hawk fly well," replied the falconer, stolidly. "I had a young bird in fine training for her own wrist. But, alas for human expectation! the bird is still in the mews, and the lady hath left the convent."

"Left it!" echoed Gilbert, with a cadaverous hue. "Villain, thou liest, and wouldst deceive me. I know well that she is there."

"Come ye to seek her, then? Alas! for the weary ride ye have had to so little purpose; and that some of your men—pize on these swamps! —have so soiled their doublets. The lady ye seek left the place a week ago."

Gilbert looked hard at the falconer, whose unblushing statement was fully supported by an unflinching look. The leader was fairly at a stand, and his eye next roamed from object to object in utter perplexity, and at last rested on the figure of a female, who appeared making her way towards the convent-gate.

"Is not that one of the holy sisterhood?" he inquired, pointing.

"Yes; and by her gait it can be none other than sister Genevieve."

"Then sister Genevieve will I question as to the truth of what thou hast told me; and woe to thy neck, hawker, if her answers tally not with thine."

"She was born to be my plague," muttered the falconer. "Gladly would she be the cause of my hanging, and then, droning out an ave for the good of my soul, think herself a saint for charity."

Quickening their pace, the men soon overtook the recluse.

"God save ye, holy sister, and peaceful be your meditations," was the leader's salutation. "By the bones of Saint Valarie! as ugly a witch as ever darkened the sun's light," he added, in an under tone, as the nun turned upon him her cold, vicious eyes, but spoke not. "Most holy sister," continued Gilbert, raising his voice, "is it an infirmity of hearing causeth you not to answer, or is it an observance of a penance forbids you speak? By the mass! if the latter, I pity you, for 'tis the heaviest mortification a woman's spirit can be subject to. Keep a soldier from his drink, and a woman from the free use of her tongue, and kill them at once, for life's not worth a plumstone."

"I hear ye, friend," replied sister Genevieve, dryly. "Neither am I debarred the free use of my tongue."

"I cry ye mercy," rejoined the leader. "Yet did I marvel ye replied

not, seeing that I have in my greeting done all but salute ye with the holy kiss—which truly may the just saints preserve me from the doing."

"If thou hast aught to ask me," said the nun, "speak, and be brief, that I may be gone."

"You come to the point," said Gilbert, "and the matter between us shall be soon despatched. In the first place, I would fain inquire whether there is not a certain young damsel named Ediva cooped up within the walls we see before us?"

"If I said yea—what then?" asked the nun.

"Nay, that is my affair," replied the soldier. "Enough that I am sent to make the inquiry; and believe me, holy sister, there might be danger in withholding from me the information I ask in all humbleness and gentleness. Let me beseech ye, for your own safety's sake, to answer with honest candour."

"Not in regard for thy sneering threat, bold man," replied sister Genevieve, undauntedly. "Did it concern me one jot to withhold from thee the fact, sooner should my tongue be torn out with hot pincers than reveal it. But, enough! She whom thou namest does in truth sojourn with us."

"Does she so!" rejoined Gilbert. "Hearest thou that, Sir Falconer? There is a lie somewhere."

"A word is but a word," said the somewhat crestfallen Ives. "Search for yourself, and if you find her——"

"Nay, I will clear off scores with thee first," said Gilbert. "Thou hast quibbled with me, and mocked us on the way; and by the bones of Saint Valarie thou shalt pay the reckoning. Roselin, undo thy belt, tie a noose, and hang it on yonder tree. You, fellows, keep a sharp look-out that he escape us not. Shrive him, holy sister, for he will soon be dangling like a crow on a barn-door."

"Good God! You would not dare to murder him, and for so slight an offence?" exclaimed the nun, while something like a touch of human feeling thrilled a frame not very susceptible to such emotions.

"Would I not!" replied the soldier. "Your own eyes shall be witness to it. Many a one have I seen strung up for a less matter. Come, lads, are ye not ready? Despatch—despatch!"

"MAN, THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER!" cried the nun, in a commanding tone; and as she uttered the simple words of the divine command, her port, usually ungainly and deformed, grew erect and almost dignified.

But its effect—if effect it had—upon Gilbert, was transient, and, with a scornful laugh, he bade his men proceed with their sickening office. The position of poor Ives was now most critical. His schemings, his plots, the mazes of his inventions were on the point of extinction. His wit, like a familiar, having duped its victim with prospect of success, now left him to his fate without stretching forth a helping hand. It was hopeless to trust merely to his heels, for already several of the men had surrounded him, with a view to prevent any attempt of the kind. The noose was prepared, and Roselin stood ready to throw it around his neck. No time was to be lost, and the sharp necessity brought its expedient. With a loud whoop, Ives shook his hawk Bright-Eye upon his wrist, and swung it into the air. The bird rose, and the eyes of the whole party were upon

it. Ives was for the moment forgot amid many bursts of admiration which came from various lips as the splendid creature sailed away. The falconer seized the favourable chance, and with the point of his quarter-staff suddenly aimed a well-directed blow upon the stomach of the foremost man gazing in the air. He fell, and falling struck the one behind, who in consequence was also overthrown. This caused considerable confusion; and Ives, striking right and left, darted through the throng, and springing across the pathway he half rolled and half ran down a precipitous bank with such force, that his neck was almost in as great jeopardy as from the rope. Pursuit would have been of little avail, and more than one man had already fixed their arrows, intending to send the shafts after him, but their leader bade them desist, the current of whose feelings was changed from anger to amusement, as he watched the ludicrous evolutions made during the falconer's descent.

"Let him go," he cried. "The knave deserves it for his boldness. And now to our business. You, Stephen, ride to the far side of the convent, and take heed that nothing in female gear issues thence. You, Roselin, keep a watch on the right. And you (addressing a follower of oblique vision) keep a look-out right and left, having the benefit of seeing both ways at once. While you, Bertulph the Saxon, who never look a man fair in the face, yet seeth all he does, note every place, and let me know if any of the fair sisterhood attempt escape. I will, myself, inquire within."

Gilbert then advanced to the gate, and in reply to his rude summons, the calm and dignified features of the lady abbess appeared, in place of the old and wrinkled visage of the portress, sister Ursula. To her Gilbert explained his errand in more respectful terms than he had hitherto used; his coarse nature being somewhat tamed, in spite of himself, before her noble bearing.

"Are ye come, then, to take the maiden by force?" inquired the abbess, when he had finished his statement.

"Not, lady, unless you oblige us to use such ungentle means. No harm is meant the damsel, who shall have fair guidance and protection on the way."

"God help her from such guidance and protection," rejoined the abbess, "and from the clutches of your Norman master, the accounts of whose rapacious tyranny have sounded even to this secluded place."

"Holy lady, trust me it would show more wisdom in ye to forbear the utterance of such harsh opinions. Will it please ye deliver up this damsel?"

"Truly, the bird is beyond the snare of the fowler," said the abbess. "The maiden is beyond thy reach."

"I am grieved to disbelieve ye, holy mother," said Gilbert, "but here stands one of your own daughters—albeit older, I should say, and less well-favoured than yourself—who has said to the contrary; and by my father's sword, I hold that she only has spoken truth."

"Thou art a saucy ruffian thus to address our most holy lady abbess," said sister Genevieve, boldly. "Though I saw the maiden at the matin-hour, it is now mid-noon, and if she be gone——"

"Peace, sister Genevieve," interrupted the abbess—"peace, lest in thy ignorance thou dost a mischief, and aid an unjust purpose."

"I doubt not your good-will to thwart me, dame abbess," said Gilbert; "but, with your leave or not, I will have that I came for. Let the gate be unbarred, and that right speedily, or I will take means to force it open."

"I have no means to resist your search," replied the abbess; "but from my lips expect no clue to guide ye. Enter."

The doors were then thrown open, and the leader, accompanied by a few of his band, went in. Ordering Genevieve to lead the way to Ediva's chamber, the recluse obeyed, having first obtained permission to do so from the abbess, who replied to her inquiry by an inclination of the head. But the place in question was void of its accustomed occupant, and Gilbert glared on all sides.

"This is witchcraft," he cried, stamping with rage. "She has flown, and everything tells of a hasty flight—yet, who hath noised my coming? How learnt she? Ha! it must be that villain knave we met by the way. Curses on him! had I but dreamt this, he had not so easily escaped me. For you, dame abbess, well is it that my Lord Fitzosborn strictly enjoined me leave you scathless, or by Saint Valarie I had singed ye hence!"

Here a hasty trampling of feet was heard approaching, and Bertulph, the renegade Saxon, speaking before he entered the apartment, exclaimed, "They are escaping—yonder they ride—quick, or they are beyond your reach. See, see—believe your eyes."

Pointing to the casement, the Saxon directed Gilbert's attention to where could be seen plainly the fugitives galloping in the distance. With clasped hands the abbess stood breathing a prayer for their safety; while the leader, with many execrations, rushed without, and hastily summoning his men, ordered the pursuit.

Whilst the foregoing scene was taking place, afar off, in the contrary direction, a piece of cloth shaped something like a bird was shaken violently to and fro at the end of a string above the low brushwood. In answer to this, a dark speck appeared high in the air, which shortly grew larger and larger, until the object pounced down, and Ives the falconer again secured his favourite hawk Bright-Eye.

"Welcome, welcome, old friend, a thousand times," exclaimed the delighted woodman. "Well met once more among the green bushes. Troth, thy master has had a shrewd run to save his neck! Fie, how my bones are bruised! Plague on the bloodthirsty villains! they think no more of stringing up a Christian than they would a mangy cur. But what need had I thrust myself among them? Ives, Ives, repent thee of hatching plots; repent in very sackcloth and ashes. And yet—ha, ha, ha! how finely they were tricked after all. What a dance did I lead them through mud and mire!—ho, ho, ho! Besides, my point was gained, Sir Wilstan having ample time to warn the Lady Ediva and aid her escape; and I doubt not both are, ere now, far away. But I will sneak off to the convent and learn how they have sped there, regaling myself the while in the buttery."

COUNT ALBERT.

BY MARY C. F. MONCK.

COUNT ALBERT was up ere the first glimpse of dawn,
When the doe from the thicket was leading her fawn.
There was dew on the grass and a flush on the sky,
And a warm, lazy zephyr lagged languidly by;
And the first crimson gleam was beginning to shine
O'er the long range of hills that look down on the Rhine.

As the world doth go, at the least 'twas surprising,
To see a count up ere a peasant was rising.
No vision of hunting hath he in his mind,
His hawks, hounds, and vassals, are all left behind;
And with brow bent and clouded he paceth the beach,
Cutting down the tall flag-leaves that grow in his reach,
With a vengeful abstraction (a mischievous whim
To be noted in others as well as in him).

Why wakes he so early? say, which of the cares
To which masters and servants in common are heirs
Doth cumber his breast,
And rob him of rest?
Hath he learned that all friendship's a mock and a jest?
Is he empty in pocket and laden with debt?
Or in love and rejected—a harder case yet?
No, no, none of these; for our hero hath gold,
And countships and lordships, and castles untold;
And his lady-love smiled, as lady-loves do,
With pin-money *ad lib.*, and snug jointures in view.

Now, we know there are folks so insane as to say
That a man should arise with the dawning of day,
And judge he'll be "healthy, and wealthy, and wise,"
By the hours when he closes and opens his eyes;
But Count Albert was none of those old-fashioned sages
(Grave blockheads, who've addled men's brains in all ages):
He had very just notions of comfort and ease,
Did quite as a versatile fancy might please;
And was wont to quote Watts's "you've waked me too soon,"
When his valet came in with hot water at noon.

But 'tis one of Dame Nature's immutable laws
That all things great and small must alike have a cause;
And night after night, to the number of three
(A magical number, all authors agree),
The sleep of the count has been vexed by a dream;
And he's fancied himself by a bend in the stream—
A spot he knows well, where, with fury and shock,
The blue waters whirl round the base of a rock,
Then weary and worn
By the pointed crags torn,
Their passionate strength by their cold foe o'erborne,
And longing for quiet, in silence subside
In a dark, waveless basin, deep, gloomy, and wide,—

Where, 'twas long ago whispered, a heart sick of life
Had ended in this world its sorrow and strife,
The count was alone on the shore in his dream,
The moon on the waves cast a tremulous gleam,
And the black pool, unruffled by current or air,
A shadowy mist on its still surface bare.
Hark! what sound does he hear?
Lo! a voice sweet and clear,
Like the song of an angel, hath struck on his ear.
Now mournful and low,
With a cadence of woe,
Till his eyes (all unused to such drops) overflow;
Now carolling high,
Like a lark in the sky,
When the clouds that have shadowed the sun are gone by.
The melody filled all the silent night air,
But the songstress—where is she?—he cannot tell where,
Till, turning, he sees at the foot of the rocks
A lovely young lady arranging her locks.

She sang, and she smiled—*such* a song! *such* a smile!
He listened and looked, his heart throbbing the while.
His lips opened to speak, and his arms to clasp,
But the void air alone did he hold in his grasp.
The warbling had ceased, and the lady was gone,
And the dreamer awoke in his chamber, alone.

But all the day after his fancy was haunted
By the face and the voice, which his heart had enchanted.
And when it grew dark,
Our adventurous spark
Went forth all alone in the hope of a lark.
The night was like Erebus, fiercely it rained,
But at length the desired place in safety was gained,
And, in *propria persona*,
There sat the fair doña.
A brilliant star-fish was the clasp of her zone; a
Profusion of rubies, and pearls, and fine gold,
Were twined round her classic head's exquisite mould;
She had long flowing hair,
And her neck being bare,
She required some protection against the night air,
And wore it in billowy waves to her waist;
Which was nothing the worse of a corsage unbraced;
But her pale face was lighted by beautiful eyes,
Where the ocean and heaven commingled their dyes:
Clear, limpid, and soft, neither black, grey, nor blue,
But more lovely than all—an unnameable hue,
That is much prized in Spain, that land of bright glances,
And very astonishing, languishing dances.

The moon most obligingly broke through the mist,
And the waves and the lady with soft radiance kist;
And he saw more distinctly the beautiful stranger
In a posture that seemed to him fraught with some danger:
For though seated securely, her garb *à l'antique*—
A costume compounded from Eve's and the Greek—
Was not quite the thing to protect from the spray
The delicate form that seemed half washed away,

For this fairest and sweetest of Amphitrite's daughters
Was half on the rock and half in the waters.
Delighted—amazed—
The Count awhile gazed.
To be sure 'twas no vision! His voice he then raised;
And addressing the lady, most warmly besought her
To let him assist her to rise from the water;
Or at least to permit him to swim to her side,
As the night wind was high, and the channel was wide,
And 'twas rather unseemly to roar at a lady.
These proffers with grace all his own having made, he
Awaited an answer; and one came at length,
In a tremulous voice, of more sweetness than strength.
"Dear Count," she replied,
"True, the channel is wide,
And perhaps it were better you kept your own side;
For I know that you love me, or fancy you do,
And with fondest affection I've long looked on you.
But now I'm determined to go from this shore,
For 'tis best for my peace I should see you no more;
Since the Lady Rosetta your bride is to be,
In absence alone is there comfort for me.
My human part craved this first, last interview;
Be you blest as I wish you—Count Albert, adieu!"

But the Count had too much real love in his heart
To let the fair creature in sadness depart.
A plunge and a splashing, and then at her side
He stood, saying, "Lady, will you be my bride?
For Rosetta is haughty, and loves not myself,
But my wealth, and my titles. What care I for pelf?
Let her have what she covets. If you will be mine,
On fish every day I will cheerfully dine;
Nay, I'll gladly consent to exist without wine;
For it's not to be thought
That your cellars are fraught
With aught that's undamaged down under the Rhine."

The mermaiden listened, her silken robe heaved,
And she sighed as her heart of a weight were relieved,
And she said, "Be it so.
I acknowledge, to go
So far from your dwelling would cause me much woe.
Now leave me, and back to your castle repair,
You're not seasoned like me to this damp river air.
Try well your betrothed, and if faithful she be,
No more shall your quiet be troubled by me;
And whatever betide, when a year shall have flown,
Return to this rock, at this hour, and alone.
If mine you may be, if your love lives unbroken,
Cast into the blue waves a rose as a token;
And freed from my vows to our monarch below,
A hand not undowered on you I'll bestow.
But should you be false,"—and her slender frame shivered,
And on her long lashes a large tear-drop quivered—
"Or should Lady Rosetta be true to her vow,
Return me the jewel I give to you now;

And far, far from your sight, or your ken I will pray,
That all shadows and clouds from your life pass away—
But for me—" She was silent: fast flowed down her tears;
And the Count's heart was shaken by manifold fears,
As she pressed on his finger a ring from her own,
Pressed his hand, gave a dive, and then left him alone.

Now night after night,
To his valet's affright,
Be the hour fair or foul, be the sky dark or bright,
When the great clock tolled midnight, the Count like a ghoul
Went forth, and wherever his wont was, to prowl.
He returned every morning, pale, haggard, and tired,
His clothes soaked and dripping, his boots all bemired;
And the *chef de cuisine*,
Overwhelmed with chagrin,
Declared such behaviour he never had seen.
His choicest *chef-d'œuvres*, those exquisite dinners,
Fit to make all the saints in the calendar sinners—
As far as indulgence in gluttony went—
Those triumphs of art on which genius had spent
Such labour and thought, were brought down from the hall
Uneaten—scarce touched—and Monsieur's latent gall,
Aroused at the insult, by consequence fell
On the corps of the kitchen, who, prone to rebel,
Put the *lex talionis* in force, and no more
Did the household enjoy the calm quiet of yore.

But Count Albert's betrothed, the Lady Rosetta,
The fairest of maidens, a regular pet—a
Bright angel of beauty—though given to look
At a lover's rent-roll, and that magical book
Where his banker's accounts stand in regular rows,
And to measure her love by the sums at their close,
Had several spies
With remarkable eyes,
So wondrously sharp, they found means to surprise
The Count, as he wandered alone on the shore
In search of the lady, who met him no more.
When they brought the sad tidings Rosetta grew pale,
And listened aghast to the terrible tale;
Then kicked in hysterics, then shrieked, tore her hair,
Asked where she was? who she was? called for more air.
And her maids spoiled her dress with a bottle of essence,
In their efforts to quiet her soul's effervescence;
They disordered her curls, and sundered her laces,
In accordance with laws that have force in such cases.
But a night's balmy sleep soothed the tone of her nerves,
And she breakfasted well on French pie and preserves;
Took two cups of chocolate, rang for her maid—
Had her tresses arranged, and her person arrayed—
And turned her tactics all over and over,
The better to pique back her recreant lover.
She determined to break off his wanderings nocturnal,
And flirted and smiled with a certain gay colonel;
And the better to judge, put her handsomest bonnet on,
A robe of rich satin, a veil of rare Honiton,

And taking for escort her maid and her dog,
Stole out, when the warder slept sound as a log,
And blessing her stars for the lovely moonshine,
Took her way by its light to the bank of the Rhine.

Now, Count Albert, as usual, watched there that night,
And the Lady Rosetta half swooned with affright
When she heard him invoke an invisible being.
She stifled a shriek, and was thinking of fleeing;
But stopped, and approached, saying, "Now is my time,
I'll catch him, and make him repent of his crime."
And she listened forthwith, as she heard him protest,
With his knee on the sand and his hand on his vest,
"That his heart, soul, and spirit, each wish of his mind,
All were lost in despair since she left him behind."
And he said in conclusion: "Thy home 'neath the wave,
If it may not be mine, shall at least be my grave."
"Oh, dear!" cried Rosetta, "I haven't a doubt
But he's making fierce love to a perch or a trout.
But I've letters enough for an action at law,
And my evidence stands without loophole or flaw."
So, with eyes flashing fury, and head to the wind,
The irascible damsel advanced from behind,
And, laying her hand on his shoulder, exclaimed:
"Yes, Sir Count, I am here. You may well feel ashamed,
Making love to a fish on this cold river brink—
You're a precious true lover and knight, I don't think.
But mind, you won't jilt me. I've thirty-five cousins,
Tall, whiskered, and brave, who've fought duels in dozens;
And my brother the lawyer, my uncle the judge,
Could help me to pay off a lingering grudge.
So you'll find it is better by far to be quiet,
And not run the risk of creating a riot.
Forgive and forget is my motto; then here,
Take my hand, we'll make up and be friends, there's a dear."

The Count looked aghast with surprise for a minute,
Until fully assured 'twas Rosetta was in it;
Then, bowing, he took the white hand she had proffered,
And said, "Grace is far sweeter, when graciously offered.
You're a sensible woman, will listen to reason:
I was nothing to you till the last London season,
When our parents agreed we were formed for each other.
True, I love you, but 'tis with the love of a brother.
You deserve something more than the half of a heart;
And another has taken of mine the best part.
I owe your affections to duty alone,
I have told you already the state of my own;
And you *must* let me act as a brother would do,
And bestow the best half of my fortune on you."
But the lady looked sly,
Looked him full in the eye,
And exclaimed, with a gasp 'twixt a groan and a sigh:
"No—if I must lose you I have but to die!—
Oh, cruel Count Albert, is this your devotion?"
Here she ceased, choked and stifled by grief and emotion.
But the fact was, she thought that the count's ancient name,
Bright with glory from many an ancestor's fame,

In itself was worth more than the half of his money.
"And moreover," she said, "now his best having done, he,
On finding it useless, will gladly succumb
To his fate, and henceforth he'll be under my thumb,
Where I'll keep him for ever in constant terrorem,
Raking up pretty often his follies before him."
Then aloud: "Ah, dear Albert, to try me you meant,
But 'twas easy to fathom and know your intent.
Were an angel to tell me you loved me no more,
I'd make him a curtsey and show him the door.
So dearest good night,
I am satisfied quite;
I shall wish for to-morrow with anxious delight,
For I'll take no excuse, you must come spend the day,
We've a great deal to settle, a great deal to say."
And not giving him time to demur or consent,
She took her maid's arm and away from him went.

Now, had not the Count and herself been in mourning
So deep that white dresses and bridal adorning
Were out of the question, 'tis certain that she
Would have married him soon, *vi et armis;* but he
Spoke of grief and decorum, and sensibly said,
It were shameful to marry—their parents just dead—
And hoping that time might bring something about,
Before the lugubrious months should be out.

Now, the artful Rosetta so well did contrive it,
That she haunted the Count both in public and private.
And he, like a candle that's placed near the fire,
Was wasting away as the year's end drew nigher.
He looked at the ring, and grew paler and paler,
His clothes hung in bags, and were sent to the tailor.
He took to lone rambling,
To racing and gambling.
His step lost its lightness, grew heavy and shambling,
And the bride elect feared,
As the wedding-day neared,
That she'd marry a beggar, for so it appeared.

The crash came at last: some dear friends of the Count,
Whose surety he was to a handsome amount,
Went off to Australia, sans leave-take or warning,
And left him to pay; and the very next morning,
His railroad shares sank—his best racer, named Meg,
In trying a leap, broke her neck and her leg;
His steward decamped with his jewels and plate,
And the Count, overwhelmed, said he knew 'twas his fate,
That "misfortunes can never come single," with all
The old-world consolations his thoughts could recal,
And finished by saying—"There's comfort for me,
In knowing that things are as bad as can be."

There was terrible work in his lodges and castles,
Strange owners came down and discharged all the vassals;
There was weeping and wailing, the women of course,
According to custom, must cry themselves hoarse;
And, wonder of wonders, a crystalline tear
Adorned the peaked end of the nose of Monsieur

As his saucepans and stewpans, of silver and brass,
Were borne from his sight: "Ah!" he murmured, "hélas!
Cela me tuera, sans doute; ah mes pauvres ragoûts!
Comme je pleure pour les maux de moi-même, et de vous."
But sheriffs make short work when once they're about it,
For feeling, 'tis said that they're often without it;
Use hardens the fine sense that prompts us to share
With zest in our neighbour's joy, pleasure, or care;
And the consequence was, that in less than a week,
Count Albert, a homeless man now, went to seek
The affectionate maiden whose love had been true,
'Gainst the paltry temptation he'd placed in her view.

Well, "'tis want proves the friend," there's no use in denying
—'Tis a saw from th' Italian well worthy the trying—
"Those that have honey will never want flies,"
With many another phrase equally wise—
May serve to show mankind was always the same,
Prone to flee from the hapless—the more be his shame.
But the Lady Rosetta had suddenly changed,
From callid to frozen—completely estranged.
From all thoughts of the past, when the Count was announced,
She stared, arched her brows as in wonder, but flounced;
And scornfully laughed when he bade her remember,
'Twas now very close to the end of September,
And the time was arrived when for better or worse,
She would take him—he dwelt on her promise, of course—
But the lady laughed louder, rang, ordered the door
To be opened—and Albert to come back no more.
"You offered," said she,
"To let me be free:
I've considered the point, and now gladly agree.
But—Count Albert! one moment—remember I wish
To be bridesmaid whenever you marry your fish."

Sure there never before was a lover rejected,
Who bore it with visage so little dejected;
He bowed like an angel, but, minus the wings,
Took leave with a couple of flattering things,
And, smiling benignly, sprang down the broad steps,
And gained the high road in a series of leaps.
Then went to a fisherman's hut, close at hand,
To the scene of his brief love affair on the strand;
And took wonderful care,
In perfuming his hair,
And deciding what suit was the fittest to wear.
So he clad his fine person in silver and blue,
With a plume in his hat of the same azure hue;
And viewed himself over as well as he could,
In six inches of looking-glass, framed in dark wood,
And stealing a rose from a tree once his own,
He set off to the river at midnight, alone.

All was silent around him: the winds were at rest,
No ripple nor wave on the blue river's breast.
He cast in the flower, and presently saw
A seal rise, and catch it at once in her paw,
Then sink, and the stillness was yet more intense,
And to agony sharpened the Count's every sense.

But at length and at last,
When a half hour had past,
And the heart of the lover beat wildly and fast,
The waters were troubled, and up from the wave
Came the mermaiden, looking exceedingly grave.
But the Count was so happy, he caught in his arms,
And bore to the shore about five feet of charms;
And he said, "Lovely creature, I'm poor as a rat,
But if you still love me I care not for that."
And his heart leaped with joy to see two little feet,
With ankles to match, excessively neat!
For if truth must be told, since he was but a man—
And the best are strange creatures, deny it who can—
He had sundry misgivings if mermaids could stand;
But now that he saw one up high upon land,
He perceived that the scaly appendage we read of,
Was a fanciful ending the tribe have no need of;
And thus was his pleasure confirmed and redoubled;
But still the fair creature looked anxious and troubled.
With faltering accents, she said, "You are true;
But a dowerless maiden may not be for you.
I have broken the laws I have owned from my birth,
By loving and wooing a creature of earth:
And our monarch ordains that all such lose their right
To the treasures of ocean; so mark you, fair knight,
There is many a lady of birth like your own,
Who gladly would reign on your heart's secret throne,
And I am a stranger, poor, friendless, and weak:
One word, and I go.—Your answer, Count, speak?"
But his answer was this—
An affectionate kiss:
And he pressed the soft hand that was next him, I wis;
And for words he said simply, "Yes, go if you choose,
But I've no intention, I tell you, to lose
A bride I have won by the loss of my wealth.
I've a pair of strong hands and a good stock of health,
And 'tis hard if with you, such a dear little wife,
I can't manage to make out a pathway in life.
In any event, let us starve or do well,
It must be together; at present you'll dwell
With my nurse in the forest, and I shall abide
In that cottage you see on the sloping hill-side."

But the mermaiden laughed such a sweet joyous sound,
'Twas echoed from hollow and hill-top around;
And she answered, "Dear Albert, d'ye think I'm a Turk,
To allow those hands aristocratic to work?
I've an agent on earth, a good-humoured Herr Robert—he
Has bought up for us all your forfeited property.
True, the monarch of ocean would give me no dower,
But I'd some of my own that was out of his power.
See here, and see here—there—there—and there—there—
And there's more when we've time to lay them all bare"—
And she showed in the sand heaps of jewels and gold,
Rich pearls from their shells fair and moonlike she rolled,
While the Count speechless said, "Can I be dreaming?
Are this wealth and this beauty delirious seeming?"

He pinched himself well his slumber to break,
And rejoiced to believe himself really awake;
And helping the lady to cover their treasure,
He gave himself up to delight without measure.

To say what rejoicings were over the land
When Count Albert returned with his wife by the hand—
To say how the tenants got drunk on the lawn—
How the wassailing lasted from nightfall till dawn—
How hock, champagne, and claret like water were poured
Down rough throats sore with shouting to welcome their lord—
How the Lady Rosetta with envy grew sick,
And nibbled her delicate nails to the quick—
How she scared by her humours all suitors away,
And unwedded survives cross and prim to this day—
Would take up much more room than our printer could spare,
And certainly very much more than our share;
So we'll leave it to fancy to sketch the details,
With a pencil so bright that reality pales,
And just say that in love affairs money should hold
A subordinate place, for the lover of gold
Can scarce be the lover of anything better,
Which saw may be taken *au pied de la lettre*.

WHEN GORE WAS A PHRENOLOGIST.

BY JOHN NAULE ALLEN.

Tom Gore and I had been to Drury Lane to see Macready play *Hamlet*. The performances over, we had repaired to a house not far distant from the theatre to obtain refreshment previous to retiring to our respective homes and beds, and while here we naturally began to discuss the merits of the acting we had just been witnessing. We were quite alone, I may say, for we neither affected the tap nor the parlour of the public, but had wandered into a room of Lilliputian dimensions obscurely situated in a back part of the establishment, only known to regular frequenters, and never discovered but by them and by inquisitive dogs belonging to other callers, that ran both up-stairs and down, and, if the door were open, into my landlady's chamber, with their noses to the ground taking a general survey of the premises whilst their owners took grog. The roar of voices that occasionally came swelling upon our ears from other apartments only made our own privacy the more delightful, and caused us to sip our brandy-and-water with greater relish. A very small room it was in which we sat; of dark and venerable aspect; you might be sure that unless the gas were burning there would be no light in the daytime, and you would incline to feel thankful that it was so. It was an owlish room, not at all calculated for daylight, which would have made it blink and look miserable—yet cosily owlish, and quite at

home amid gas-lights and tinkling glasses. There was but one window, which, on account of being thoroughly seasoned with tobacco-smoke, did not permit a view of over the way even, though over the way was but a yard off, and consisted of a coal-hole and a bottle-rack—the back-yard hereditaments. Staid and solemn itself, you no sooner entered the room than all thoughts of frivolity forsook you, and you were insensibly led to conduct yourself as though you stood face to face with a very sage. Being so small and quite unventilated, it obtained considerably with stout gentlemen who love smoking and hate talking: smoke a single screw, and the whole place was in a cloud, and Oblivion waved her languid wing over every man present, who was glad to keep his mouth closed for fear of choking. Different to the tap, here were no gaudy show-cards with clowns upon them fighting duels with ginger-beer at twopence a bottle; neither Garrick as *Richard*, with one leg torn off and beer in his face, which had got there by mistake, having been thrown, with the feelings of outraged humanity, at another gentleman by a journeyman joiner, on account of a misunderstanding. Here there was no ornament but a picture, framed and glazed, the subject of which was undistinguishable on account of smoke and dirt; and a bell-pull that had unaccountably changed from green to yellow. A gas-pipe commenced in the middle of the ceiling, and terminated in a light about a couple of yards from the ground, just over the table, which, with the sofa-long-settle, covered with black leather and stuffed with horse-hair, and the dust of ages and of the maid's sweeping, constituted the whole furniture. And here we lighted our cigars, and sat and talked criticism.

No matter what the criticism was. It was only spoken, and I am not going to risk my reputation by printing it. It served to amuse us then, and that was quite sufficient—and, indeed, of all things in the world I know of nothing more pleasant than to criticise. It is the choicest dish of every-day life, and by far the most agreeable of all literary tasks, and so Tom and I went in for critics, and felt complacent, no doubt; for if a man does not feel so as he sits over brandy-and-water, smokes a good cigar, and criticises what he flatters himself he understands, *sans doute* he will feel complacent under no circumstances whatever. Both of us had talked a good deal, and I had fixed my eye on the gas-light, and was running on, like an express train carrying heavy goods, respecting the scene in which the *Prince* and *Horatio* stand over *Ophelia's* grave, and the former takes up Yorick's skull, when, happening to withdraw my eyes from the light aforesaid, they fell upon Gore's face. I could not help starting slightly as they did so; and it was a wonder I did not leap up and ring the bell and call for the waiter. Two minutes before, Tom had been chatting carelessly and looking jovial enough, so that I was much surprised to see that his countenance had undergone a very considerable change. He was paler than usual, and was staring vacantly. Were we poisoned? No: he wore an expression about the eyes and mouth that plainly told of mental pain. At any rate, it was time for me to speak in another key; so, "Why, Tom, what's the matter?" I asked.

"Nothing," said he, with something like a gasp; "but don't talk about skulls."

"Why not?"

I waved my hand and blew to dissipate the fumes created by the cigars, so as to command a better view of my man, who answered:

"Because it reminds me of a certain affair, which——"

He applied his glass to his mouth and drank deep. I followed him on a smaller scale. This accomplished, I looked at Tom again, who was engaged in a study of the cloudy picture before referred to, and so I fixed my gaze upon the yellow bell-pull—quite abstractedly, you know.

This was a situation almost as uncomfortable as that of a maid-of-all-work in a London eating-house, where no man-servant is kept to gladden her heart, and clean the knives and forks and pewter spoons; but I knew Gore sufficiently well to leave him to clear up the awkwardness himself, and neither to offend his vanity by passing over the circumstance to another topic, nor to render him dumb by questioning him. And yet I could not help thinking. What could make him all of a sudden change colour and gasp like that? some recollection evidently, and connected with skulls. Had he ever been with a Red-hot Indian scalping party, or had he himself ever played the character of *Hamlet* and been hooted off the stage in consequence of allowing the quasi skull to fall upon the ground and burst in all the agony of a large turnip neatly scooped? No: although Gore certainly did yet look queer and perturbed, I could not bring myself to say "Very likely" to either of these questions, and could only wait till he revealed, as I had little doubt he would reveal, the facts. Perturbed he certainly did look, and absent. Just then, had any one asked him what day of the month it was, he would surely have looked at his watch, and might have answered, "Half-past January," or something like that. But I neither asked, nor intended to ask, him a question at all; and had he not broken the silence, we might both have been sitting in that little den even unto this hour.

Tom Gore was what I think I may call a fine-looking fellow, though some people might call his looks curious rather than fine—I mean his looks in a general way, and not as he sat there staring at the old picture. He was interesting-looking, if that is liked better. There are two kinds of persons whose appearance ladies describe as interesting: the first are those that most nearly resemble the wax models that stare at you with all the insipidity of a cup of cold coffee from fashionable hairdressers' windows—the second quite the opposite of those kind of material. Well, there was certainly nothing insipid to be discovered in the cast of Tom Gore's features; and I know that when Fanny Waters gave him her hand, as she did some few years after the time of which I speak, she could have done so from no fancied resemblance he bore to a beauty in the perfumery business. His face at the first glance struck you as being at once weatherbeaten and cadaverous, and this impression became only partially qualified when you had come to know him well; for he had travelled much and studied more, and both study and travel had left their marks upon him. One had done all it could to bleach him, and the other had used its best endeavours to impart to him the colour of a Bedouin, so between them, in their ravages, if they had not made him classically handsome, they had at least taken anything like inanity out of his face, if it ever resided there, and given him the unquestionable appearance of having something in him. And something he surely had in him which I somewhat anxiously expected he would bring out, as we sat

in that little room. Of course, with a face like that, he ought to have had thick, black, curly hair—which he had; lying in clusters on his ample brow—as it did: and he had eyes as black, and teeth as white, and a nose as perfect as any lady could desire to see. Moreover, he had a commanding, unexceptionable figure, and was a very king of a good fellow, though not always jovial. I just see Tom as he sat that night, and my pen runs on almost in spite of me, or I know not why I should tell you all this about his figure and his face; for, for aught I know, what follows might have followed just the same if his outward man had been the direct antipodes of what it was—if, instead of being the model of a warrior, or something of that sort, he had been the model of a Quaker, or something of that sort.

Talking of models—Tom was an artist. That has nothing to do with my story; but he was, and no little one; his powers, now in his twenty-seventh year, steadily increasing, and his fame with them. Four years before, his first picture had been exhibited at the Academy—subject, "Julian saluted as Emperor by the legions of Gaul,"—and was of course very badly hung, and Tom had got on terribly in consequence. He had even gone so far as to advise Mr. Sayles, of the hanging committee, to hang his (Tom Gore's) next picture upside down, sir—upside down; gaining for himself a very bad opinion from Mr. Sayles thereby, and not paving the way at all for a good place the following year; but by his courage raising himself much in the estimation of other young artists whose works had been similarly suspended. Young Greenlow, whose picture was the worst of the season, had even proposed that a dinner should be given in Tom's honour in consequence, and actually did stand two bottles of wine at the Cock one night. But, notwithstanding the malice of the hanging committee, Julian and the legions excited attention—*the* attention of a French count; much to the delight of Tom and the chagrin of Mr. Sayles, doubtless. The count was seen to stand before the picture, heard to declare that *c'était superbe*, and to make inquiries after the artist; and he being found, a bargain of purchase and sale was concluded. At the proper time the count received the painting, but made the mistake to leave his lodgings and the country without paying for it; and since that day Tom had kept on painting, and improving, and getting better hung, and better. And now, having withdrawn his eyes from the old, undistinguishable engraving, he sat in that little room gazing at the fire and gently smoking his cigar.

A fire there was, as there deserved to be, for the weather was cold, and that night unusually so, and even the close, diminutive box in which we were would have been insufferable without fire. Indeed, the weather had been severe for some weeks, and everybody you met was complaining of it. People with plenty of blankets, and large coal-cellars well filled, could not keep warm; and as for those who had neither, it was no use trying to. People who seldom saw money—God help them!—limped miserably through the streets, or quietly starved at home; and those who saw plenty—cashiers travelling on towards the goal of superannuation—ran great chances every day—with heigho! the wind and the rain—of forgetting themselves and acknowledging in their despatches the receipt of rheumatism. Entering an omnibus was like having a dip at the North Pole swimming-baths; and as you passed and looked into cheerless con-

fectioners' shops, you inclined to ask yourself how you could have been so ridiculous as to eat strawberry ices five months ago. It was just that sort of weather; so Tom rang the bell, and told the waiter to replenish our glasses, which had become empty, and to bring more coal and cigars —which he did.

"And now," said Gore, turning to me—I was all attention in a moment—"and now about this." He touched his head with his hand, drank again, and seemed but ill at ease yet. "About this skull."

I hardly knew whether he meant Yorick's skull or his own, but waited for him to reveal.

"As I have been forced to night into thinking of it, I will ease my mind by telling you all about it," he continued.

He rose and drew a little red curtain that appertained to the window, and we simultaneously moved near the fire. And then he told his tale, which, as I do not pretend to recollect his exact words, I intend to relate here in my own.

"My friend was bred and born in the country. When he was about sixteen years old his father died, leaving him and his mother to get along as well as they could upon eighty pounds a year, and to console themselves for his loss by the love they bore each other. For Heaven seldom takes from us all we love; when it does so, the fault must lie at home, in the narrowness of the heart. And these two tendrils, deprived of the hearty tree to which they had clung, held on their way by clinging to each other. Mr. Gore died in his prime, and his widow was yet quite young. Tom was still at school, and, according to all accounts, making great progress there; but what more easy at such a time than for his mother to persuade herself that she would be his best teacher, and that he would learn better, and be better at home? He was taken from school, and she had her only child always near her. At that age, and before, Tom had taken to spoiling paper and canvas with bad pencils and execrable paint. His time was spent as might have been expected: for every hour he gave to his books he gave two to his palette (if he had one; and if he had not, it came to the same thing in the end), and for every two hours he gave to that he offered three as a sacrifice to Nothing. But his mother soon saw that he was bent upon being a painter, and her fondness persuaded her that he would become a great one. You have heard of how young West absented himself from school, and laboured secretly in his garret on his picture; and how, in consequence of inquiries from the schoolmaster, his mother entered his studio to chastise him, but, seeing his performance, fell upon and kissed him. So Tom's mother saw in every crude achievement of his the beauty of Rosa or Canova, and permitted him to occupy his time nearly as he would. All this I tell to you because Gore told it to me.

"She was a dear, young, innocent soul, my mother was," said he, "and she had loved my father dearly. We used to sit for hours talking of him, and she would gaze upon me for a long time at once with her very heart in her face thinking of him, for I, in my looks, much resembled him. In those days I had few companions; but I had my drawing, my books, and other things to engage me; whilst to my mother I was everything. And when she got me by her side, talking about my father,

I believe she was as happy as anything could have made her happy short of having that father himself with her. Could she have known of what I was shortly to be guilty, how she must have grown stiff from terror as she looked upon me!"

He dabbled in, and in time became tired of, botany, fiddling, and other crotchets, that he was allowed to take up and throw away to prevent his time becoming monotonous, and so some three years went by, when the walls of the little town in which he lived were one morning posted with flaming placards, announcing that Mr. Twiby would deliver a lecture in the Town-hall on phrenology, with illustrations, on a certain day. Here was new occupation for him: he would go and hear this lecture, and afterwards study the science. Before the time for the demonstration came he had possessed himself of two or three books on the subject; consequently he went to the room with a mind somewhat prepared for the elucidation. He heard it and returned home, and went to bed, I may say, with a head full of heads. He neglected not his sketching; but next to that phrenology occupied his attention for some time. He never went to a party without ruffling the fair hair of some fair creature, putting the locks of some ambitious gentleman out of order, or fingering the bald bumps of some baby destined, in the opinion of pa and ma, for great and wondrous things. Then he began, or thought he began, to get deeper into the subject than the lecturer he had heard. He bought a chalk head with all the bumps developed; and not satisfied with telling the persons whose bumps he examined what those bumps were, he wrote out long articles, in which he made curious assertions, I have no doubt, as to the character of those individuals, as to what they were fit and what they were unfit for, and made sufficient artists, musicians, and poets in his little town to find the United Kingdom in paintings, polkas, and epics for a whole generation. At length the chalk head failed to satisfy him. He became possessed of a notion about the frontal sinus, and this he was anxious to become acquainted with. "I must have been at that time half a fool at least," said Tom; "and to study this subject the better I longed for a real skull."

And Diogenes wanted an honest man; but where to come at one—there lay the difficulty. Lifeless skulls are not common things in the market-place, and few persons are supposed to possess them, thank goodness! Tom knew of nobody who had one except a surgeon, and with him he was not sufficiently intimate to ask him for the loan or the use of it; and such a request would certainly, under such circumstances, have been refused if he had been. But the sight of the difficulty did not put his enthusiasm to flight, and for many a day he brooded over the matter when he might have been doing better; and at last, God forgive him!—to use almost his own words to me—he resolved upon what he had for some time thought of, it is true, but always shrunk from—he would have a skull out of the churchyard. The resolve formed, he ceased—he would not allow himself—to see the enormity of the act he was about to commit. He persuaded himself it was for the benefit of science (he went so far as that), and that the end would justify the means; and this might almost have been the case with older fellows and greater saints than Tom was, or pretended to be, an old fellow or a saint. How well most of us can advocate our own cause when we are our own judge!—we always come out of court with flying colours then. We can fuddle his lordship on the bench until he

will agree to anything we list; and we can make black appear white, or of any other hue, to the greenness of his eye, quite easily. He will leap over everything that might go against us, and call cross-questions to order, and dismiss the case in our favour without waiting to hear the chief witness on the other side. We all know that. And when Tom's case came on, *his* lordship was in the usual facile humour, it is to be presumed, and gave it in our friend's favour. Gore had provided himself with a spade, and all he now waited for was a dark night. Nobody was to be taken into his confidence. He was to accomplish all himself, alone.

A night dark, dark as death, came; and he prepared himself for the undertaking. He had seen that his spade was all right, and had placed it in readiness, and about ten o'clock, to prevent his mother from discovering his absence, he retired to his bedroom, taking care to let her know, by moving a chair and so on, that he had gone to bed. He lay with his clothes on for about an hour, his whole frame in a fever. He knew no fear, but he was about to accomplish that for which he had longed, and which he had meditated for days and days. He felt it was romantic and like a novel, and persuaded himself there was a little bravery in him to allow him to attempt such a thing. About eleven o'clock he rose from his bed and stole slowly, stealthily down stairs; and out of the house he went, spade in hand. It *was* a dark night. Not even a star was to be seen; but he knew his way well enough, and, notwithstanding the darkness, if he did not run all the way he walked extremely fast, and very soon arrived at the churchyard gates, over which he had to climb, for they were locked.

He remembered well enough, he told me, that as soon as he alighted on the other side a strange feeling came over him; a great deal of his former courage forsook him, and he went stumbling over the graves, neither knowing nor asking himself which way he was going. A revelation of the fearfulness of the act he was about to commit suddenly seemed to fall upon him, and he grew so weak that he was obliged to stand and take hold of a tombstone for support. Still, his resolution was taken, and he not even for a moment contemplated abandoning it. He had left home in a state of feverish excitement, but the coolness of the night—for it was cold as well as dark—coupled with the strange feeling that had taken hold of him, sent a chill through his frame, and his blood felt like cold water flowing in his veins.

"I have often wondered," said Tom, as he told the tale, "how I could do that when a comparative child, which now, in my manhood, fear and timidity, if nothing else, would deter me from. I suppose it was because I was not a man, and could not think like one, that I could do it."

However, he did not stand by the tombstone many minutes, he believed; but went along over the graves. He had lost his way, and still did not know where he was going. But he began to grope for a grave such as he wanted: that is, one neither too old nor too new; one that was likely to contain a skull not imperfect through great age, nor yet, oh, horror! invested with flesh. Well, he found it impossible to tell by the grass on the grave the age of the latter, and so he applied himself to the stones, and tried to read the dates by his sense of touch. He came to several that were respectively too early and too recent for his purpose; for he had calculated, and indeed pretty accurately ascertained, how old

the—what he sought for—ought to be; and then he ran his hand over part of the inscription on one stone, and made out the figures 183—; and paused. He purposely missed feeling for any further information on the stone, for being aware that it was probable he might be on the grave of some one he had known, he had persuaded himself that his not knowing whose bones he was disturbing would diminish the enormity. In a few moments the spade was in the ground. Gore first of all carefully cut out the sod in square patches—this he did kneeling—and laid them together on one side, that he might replace them neatly. This done, he digged deeply as he could, but he felt weak, and, do what he would, he could not help thinking of the extreme darkness of the night, and the extreme whiteness he knew his face wore, and contrasting them. Every spadeful of earth appeared to him a ton, every minute an eternity; but he rested and rested, and worked and worked, for upwards of two hours; and then he felt and heard the spade strike against something hard. He struck again, and then he knew it was the coffin. With the excess of unusual work he was perspiring before, but now "cold drops of sweat hung on his trembling limbs," the spade dropped from his hand, and he was obliged to lean, or rather he fell, against the side of the grave—which supported him.

When sufficient strength had returned to him, he stooped to pick up the spade, when he grasped a something in his hand, which he knew was —what he had been labouring for. In an instant he was out of the grave with it in his hand, and, being out, he once more breathed freely: the brunt of the difficulty was over now, and all that remained to do was to throw back the earth he had disembedded. Then he became aware that he had left the spade in the grave. Nothing he did on that night called forth such a struggle as the struggle he had to undergo before he could descend again into the tomb. Had he just escaped from the jaws of a lion he could not have returned to them more hesitatingly; but down he went again, however, and returned with his implement. Laying the skull behind the stone that he might find it easily, he began to throw in the earth. He worked eagerly at this and soon finished, taking care to scrape up the earth as clean as possible with his hands; for, though he despaired of doing this so thoroughly as to leave no mark, he yet hoped to do so to such an extent as to leave the ground unnoticeable. He then relaid the sod as neatly as his sense of feeling would allow him, and, seizing the skull and shouldering the spade, prepared to leave the churchyard, yet ignorant of the exact part he was in. After some trouble he reached the boundary wall, and, scaling this, alighted on the other side. He was sufficiently well acquainted with the geography of the town to know where he was then, and walking quickly off, soon arrived at home. He stole creepingly up-stairs, first to his own room, where he procured a light, with much fear of being heard, and considerable trembling; and that done, proceeded to another room, in which he kept his books, read, and painted, and of which, for the house was but small, a sitting-room was generally made for his mother also. Tom was in the habit of depositing his drawing materials in a closet in this room, of which closet he had the key, and which he now opened and put in the skull.

The light showed Tom his ghostly prize, that as he walked with it cast a moving shadow on the wall—a gliding, fearful shadow, that made Tom turn aside his face, and that sent a faintness to his heart, and seemed more deadly than the substance which he carried in his hand, though *that* he now wished resting in its native earth again. It was partially covered with damp, black earth, and was, indeed, hardly in any part clear from it; but, nevertheless, it was a skull, and stared at him so ghastily with its eyeless sockets, that he was glad to secure the door and hide it from his sight. He went to bed as the clock was striking three, and heard it strike four and five before he slept. His sleep, such as it was, was dreamless, and with the daylight he arose.

But a change had come over him. The ardent longing he had had for a skull was now succeeded by as great a disinclination, yea, a perfect dread, to come again into the presence of the one he had procured; and that morning, although he sat uncomfortably at the breakfast-table, and took every mouthful furtively, afraid of each action betraying to his mother the dark action of the previous night, he prolonged the meal as much as he could before going to the room where it was. When he had exhausted all pretext for further delay, he proceeded there, and the hours he spent were torturing. He, who in the churchyard had been bold, was now to an extremity cowardly. His mother sat near him, engaged with her needlework, while he occupied himself in sketching, having his back to the door of the closet, where the skull was, alone—for he had taken out his drawing materials the night before. He could pay no attention to what he was doing. He could only imagine it with those fearful sockets staring towards him through the wood. His mother noted his looks, and he told her he felt unwell, and that he would walk out. It was only when he rose for that purpose he discovered he had placed on the canvas *that* skull.

He went out into the fields, walked slowly, then fast, and again ran; but do what he would he could not shake off that skeleton head. He had left his sketch on the stand, and now this became a source of misery to him. He could only see the original and the copy, face to face as they were, staring at each other. Then he could not dissuade himself that either he had neglected to lock the closet-door, and that his mother would look in, or that she would be tempted by something to break it open. Even by this time fever was advancing upon him. He hurried home, and that night was put to bed in an unmistakable state of fever.

For some weeks he was confined to his bed; during that time consciousness, except in sleep, never forsook him. He knew well enough—much too well—what he had done, and that skull was ever with him. Never since the night on which he had brought it home had he seen it, and he now only longed for health to take and restore it to the place whence he had taken it. But illness continued to weigh upon him, and for a time even his life was despaired of. By degrees he recovered, however, until he was able to go out of doors, when the doctor ordered him to ride out. It was something to get out once more—it brought him nearer to his object—the restoration of the skeleton head, which he was now more desirous to take back than he had ever been to fetch away.

The day on which he got into the phaeton, hired purposely for him for the first time, he ordered the driver to make for ——. He named this place, as he knew they must pass the churchyard to get to it. Past the churchyard he requested the man to drive slowly, so that he might have a better chance of discovering the grave which he had robbed, and to which the restoration must be made as soon as sufficient strength had returned to him. They started from the door at which Tom's mother stood, looking more cheerful than he had seen her look for many a day, on account, he well knew, of his convalescence. He returned her look as well as he could, and was driven off.

They drove slowly off, and when they reached the old churchyard Tom bade his companion stop the horse, and made the best use of his eyes to discover, if he could, any peculiarity about the turf; but, as far as he could discover, there was no such peculiarity, and he gave the word to drive slowly on. For some distance they proceeded, and nothing Tom looked for was obvious. But at last they came to a certain stone, when again the horse was checked, not because Gore saw anything like what he looked for, but because this stone stood at the head of his father's grave, and never since his death had Tom gone near it without pausing before it. He stood up in the phaeton to see the better, and read again the date of the birth and of the death, and the simple quotation from Scripture, and was just about to sit down again, when his eyes chanced to fall upon the grass that overgrew the grave which appeared to be not so green, and to be more the colour of the earth than the rest of the graves. He wondered why this should be so, but he soon ceased to wonder. He suddenly fell back in his seat, gasped to the driver "Go on," and he was faint, and sick, and cold; for he knew that the grave he had robbed, and the head he had at home, were his father's grave and his father's head!

"Yes, you may well regard me with horror," said Tom, as he told the story, and reached this point. "I, to this day, have no notion where we went to in the drive that followed; I only remember arriving at home. My mother noticed the change for the worse in my appearance, and commiserated with me; but I never knew what she said, for we both sat in the room in which it was, she within two yards of it; and had I been guilty of murder I could not have been more overwhelmed with shame, fear, confusion. Such would have been a trial to the strongest man—to me, in my weak state, it was trebly trying; but I would bear up. And I did bear up, my strength returned, and one night * * *"

The brandy-and-water had become flat in the glasses, the lights of the cigars had gone out, they but half smoked when Tom concluded his story. When we sat down so pleasantly to criticism, who could have expected that things like these would out? But

Urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est.

"I say—waiter——"

THE LAST OF THE HOUSE.

By William Pickersgill, Esq.

XXIV.

THE ROBBERY.

On a cold, wet night, sat a miserable and attenuated-looking being in one of the lower apartments of the Old Hall. The place was destitute of almost every vestige of furniture. An old chair (the upper part of which was broken), a small round table, and a few articles of crockery-ware were nearly all that the room contained. In a corner of the room, huddled together, were a few time-worn quilts and blankets, which, when spread upon the floor, served for the purpose of a bed. The walls and ceiling of the room were excessively damp, and sufficiently indicated the bad state of repair into which the house had been suffered to fall. Upon the table stood an old tin candlestick, into which was stuck a rushlight, which threw a dull and sickly gleam over the apartment. A portable iron stove stood upon the hearth, in which a few cinders were burning. A man sat close to it upon a chair, holding his hands over the top, in order to obtain as much warmth as possible from the burning embers. It was Horncastle, the lord of the manor—the proprietor of an estate whose yearly rental was equal to that of any landed proprietor in the riding.

It was the first day of his possession, and he had been occupied some hours in making such preparations for his reception as he deemed necessary. Nothing, with the exception of the few articles I have mentioned, had been brought into the house, and no person had been employed either to make any repairs or alterations. Mr. Horncastle, indeed, considered it to be unnecessary. He was a single man, and could easily dispense with these articles of luxury and expense, to which men, in other circumstances, are so often obliged to submit. He regulated his conduct by the principle which his heart most warmly approved of. He hated extravagance—he detested the expensive habits which many people are in the habit of indulging in, and which only serve to engender disappointment and ruin.

"Ah," he said, as he sat over the fire, "things are greatly changed. I am changed. This old mansion is changed. I knew it when it was in its pride—in its glory. I knew it when those to whom it belonged were in the height of their splendour and prosperity, and when not a family in Yorkshire possessed greater influence. Ah, it was a proud, a noble house. Did any member of it ever think that the family mansion would fall into such a state as this—did any of them think it would come into the possession of a poor decripid old man like myself? Ha—ha—these are grievous changes, I trow—grievous changes."

When he had made these reflections, he rose from his seat, and taking a candle, he left the room. He wandered along all the passages and galleries and looked into every place. When he had done so, which, from the extent of the house, occupied him a considerable time, he descended to one of the cellars under ground, which he also carefully examined, but found nothing to awaken his suspicions. The old man paced across the floor a few times—he felt uneasy—he knew not why. His mind appeared

to be oppressed with forebodings of approaching danger, and for the first time he became aware of the isolated character of his situation, and of his weakness and helplessness in case any sudden emergency should arise. Hark! what noise was that! He listened—all was still. He breathed more freely and resumed his walk. Hush! a noise again broke upon his ear, and again almost immediately died away. Still he was restless—still his mind was haunted with a misgiving which it was impossible to remove. Horncastle continued his vigils for upwards of an hour, but he heard nothing, and he began to fancy that his alarm had been without any real foundation.

Before he retired to rest he had a duty to perform, which for many years he had never omitted, and which, apart from its necessity, was one that was always attended with a great deal of pleasure. With some little difficulty he succeeded in raising a flag from the floor of the cellar, which he laid aside. When he had removed the stone, a somewhat wide and deep cavity presented itself, into which, with the aid of a small ladder, he descended, and presently returned with a strong iron-box, which was as much as he could carry. Drawing a key from his bosom, he placed it in the lock, and raised the lid. The box was the receptacle of his treasures. It contained the money which he kept in his own possession. He took the bags out one after another, and placed them upon the lid of the box. He took the gold from each bag and counted it, and having satisfied himself that the number of pieces was correct, he deposited them again in the bags, which he again placed in the box. It would be impossible to give an adequate idea of the pleasure that the process of counting his money seemed to afford him; he gloated over the gold with the most intense delight, and as though the affections of his whole heart were concentrated upon it. At this conjuncture, he imagined he heard approaching footsteps. He turned pale and began to tremble, whilst his eyes were closely riveted upon the entrance to the place. A minute scarcely elapsed before the door was thrown open, and a strong light cast into the damp and gloomy vault.

Horncastle was overcome with alarm, but his instinctive love of money had not deserted him. He threw his arms over the box and awaited the issue of the intrusion.

A tall figure stepped forward, bearing a lantern in his hand. He was clad in a rough blue coat, and he wore a shaggy skin cap upon his head.

"Ha, ha! Sie sind beschäftigt, Herr Horncastle."

"Lindenberg!" said the old man, when he had recovered breath.

"Yes," said the intruder, who spoke English almost like a native. "I suppose you did not expect to see me?"

"Why I thought you were gone. It was announced in the papers a day or two ago that the *Pfeil* had sailed."

"It was not our ship, Mr. Horncastle; it was another of that name."

"Where have you come from?"

"From the vessel. I have paid you a visit at the proper season it seems. I want to borrow some money—there is plenty in that box I suspect."

"It is not mine, Mr. Lindenberg—it must be all paid away."

"I only want a hundred or two."

"If the money was my own, I would lend it with pleasure."

"Well, but I must be plain with you, Horncastle. I still want money. I have come here on purpose to see you. You are the only man who can liberate me from my difficulties."

"I, Mr. Lindenberg. I?"

"Yes, you."

"I am poor—poor. I have scarcely sufficient to keep myself."

"Are you not ashamed to tell me so? Remember you are an old man—you cannot have many more years to live. I have heard that you have bought this estate."

"That is true—but I borrowed the money."

"I do not believe it—whether it be so or not, it does not alter my position. I want money. I must have it. I see it within my grasp, and do you think I am so great a fool as to go away empty-handed. I give you this hint to put you on your guard."

"You would not take advantage of a poor, weak old man, I'm sure," said Horncastle.

"When I have an object in view I do not take these things into consideration."

"This is strange language, Lindenberg."

"It is the language of a needy man."

"If you will wait till to-morrow," replied Horncastle, "I will see what I can do for you."

"My time is precious. The vessel is ready for sea, but we can't sail till I have obtained a certain sum of money."

"What amount do you want?"

"One hundred and fifty pounds," replied Lindenberg.

"Good God! how do you expect to raise such an enormous sum as that?"

"Through your assistance. I have no other means."

"Through my assistance! I am unable to render you any aid."

"The money is already in your possession."

"I repeat it is not mine. I must pay it away immediately—to-morrow at latest."

"I am not to be deceived by such an excuse."

"Come to-morrow and I will see what can be done.

"To-night the matter must be settled. I shall not leave this place without taking the money with me."

"Although I am an old man," said Horncastle, "I will not passively suffer myself to be robbed."

"Beware how you act. I am a desperate man, and one dangerous to trifle with."

"I have given you an answer—the money is not my own."

"I don't care for that. I want it, and must have it."

"I will defend it with my life."

"The blood be on your head," said Lindenberg, springing forward and seizing the old man by the throat.

"Help, help!" he cried. "Thieves, thieves!"

Horncastle strove to release himself from the powerful grasp of his antagonist, but in vain. He was a child in his hands and could offer no sort of resistance. Lindenberg hurled him from him with all his force, and the old man fell heavily against the stones, striking the ground with

his head. Whilst he was in this position, Lindenberg secured his hands and legs with a rope which he drew from his pocket, and thus prevented any chance of his giving an alarm. He took from the box as much gold as he could conveniently carry, and made his escape.

XXV.

THE DECLARATION.

For weeks and weeks Merton had been employed upon the portrait of Kate Wallford. Although he usually took great delight in his favourite pursuit, yet it need not excite much surprise to hear that no portrait he had ever before taken in hand had afforded him so much pleasure as the one in question. He daily watched its progress with the most extreme delight, and every tint he added to it, only served to render it a more striking likeness of the beautiful and accomplished original. During the first few sittings she had favoured him with, he made little progress with it. He was too much agitated by the situation in which he was placed, too deeply in love with the beautiful girl that sat before him, to devote that attention to the subject that it required. There are some who will be able to conceive such a position as that which I have described; there are some who will be able to form some notion of the feelings of the enthusiastic young artist as his gaze was concentrated upon the countenance of the woman he adored. It was a moment in his existence worth remembering—it was like a fleeting ray of sunshine across a gloomy and desolate landscape—a brilliant meteor which appears for a second and vanishes for ever—it was an event in an existence worth all the commonplaces that happen in a century. It was one of those moments which are looked back to at every point of our subsequent career with regret.

The earlier sittings, as I have said, were not attended with much progress. It was not till she had sat to him at least a dozen times that he can be said to have made any progress with the portrait. The work then began to go forward rapidly, and the lovely countenance so nearly resembled life, that it almost began to speak from the canvas.

When it was finished he carried it to Miss Wallford, and presented it to her. I shall not say with what gratitude it was received. I shall not say what praise was bestowed upon the skill of the enamoured painter.

It was a few days after the completion of the portrait that Merton determined a second time to come to an explanation with Kate. He saw that his affections were daily becoming deeper and deeper involved, and he was perfectly conscious that the longer an explanation was delayed the greater the difficulty would be, in case his suit should be unsuccessful, of overcoming a passion which had already taken so deep a root. I will not say that he was altogether without hope, although he was certainly by no means sanguine of success. A lover, however, is like nobody else—to-day he is confident, to-morrow in a state of abject despondency—the next day his heart is beset with a thousand doubts and misgivings. One day, therefore, is no indication of the actual state of his mind, and it is only by taking several together that you can arrive at the real state of the case.

Merton was instigated to this course by another cause. He was disgusted with the office drudgery he had to perform, and each day added to the aversion he entertained for Grub. Whilst his mind was gradually

being weaned from mercantile pursuits, it was becoming, in a proportionate degree more and more attached to painting. In the situation in which he was, he could hope for no advancement. His mind had never been fairly given to it—everything connected with it was too dull and commonplace. There was no play for the imagination. It was merely plod-plodding in the same eternal course day after day. It was like a horse driving a thrashing-machine, and going perpetually over the same small circumference of ground. If, therefore, his addresses should prove unacceptable to Kate Wallford, he should be able to leave, without much regret, a neighbourhood where no ties were sufficiently strong to induce him to remain. He would seek his fortunes elsewhere, and henceforth devote all his energies to the pursuit to which his heart was already so firmly wedded.

These were the thoughts that passed through the mind of Merton as he sought the interview which was destined to exercise so great an influence over his subsequent fate. When he had reached the house, he hesitated some time before he ventured to announce himself. He at length knocked at the door, which was opened by Fred.

"Well, Merton, how are you?" he said. "Come in."

Fred led the way into the parlour.

"How is Mrs. Wallford?" inquired Merton.

"She is tolerably well," replied Fred. "She has gone out for a short while, but she will return presently."

"And is Kate quite well?" he inquired.

"Yes; she will be here just now, and as I promised to escort my mother home, I must consign her to your care till I return."

"Are you going immediately?"

"Yes; I shall be back again in a short time. I will tell Kate you are here—she is only upstairs."

Fred left the room. The portrait of Miss Wallford, which Merton had painted, was suspended from the wall. He took up the candle to examine it. The extreme loveliness of the countenance would at once have arrested the attention of a stranger. The marble forehead, the beautifully-chiselled nose and mouth, the clustering hair, that wreathed round a neck of snowy whiteness, at once bespoke a being capable of inspiring the love of a poet or a painter.

It was not long before Kate presented herself. Her complexion was somewhat paler than usual, and her countenance appeared to be overshadowed by a more thoughtful and earnest expression than that which commonly characterised it. These little alterations, however, in her personal appearance in no way detracted from her beauty.

"How do you do, Mr. Merton?" she said, walking quickly forward to meet him, and extending her hand. "Fred told you, I suppose, he was obliged to go out?"

"He did," said Merton; "and he also added that he should consign you to my care till his return."

"Oh! he need not be under any apprehension for my safety. It is not a very customary thing, now-a-days, for young ladies to be carried away by main force in the absence of their friends and relations."

"And yet we do even at this day occasionally hear of such things," observed Merton.

"Yes, but the lady has been a consenting party."

"Well, there may be some truth in that."

"However," added Kate, "I shall console myself by the conviction that none will make the attempt with me, either with or without my consent."

"There you are, perhaps, speaking too hastily, Miss Wallford."

"How so?"

"I think that a person of your great personal attractions and accomplishments will be likely to have many admirers."

"This is flattery, Mr. Merton."

"It is not indeed, Miss Wallford. There is one at least who would willingly make any sacrifice—encounter any difficulty—if he could only but receive an assurance from your lips that his love was not altogether indifferent to you—that you took more than an ordinary degree of interest in his fate."

As Merton thus gave vent to his feelings, he knelt at the feet of Kate, and, taking hold of her hand, pressed it to his lips.

"Oh! Miss Wallford—Kate," he resumed, "since first I was introduced to you I have longed for this moment that I might unburden my heart to you—that I might tell you how much I have loved you, and that you are the only being upon earth who is capable of rendering me happy. My fate hangs upon your word—I beseech you to think well before you announce your decision."

"I did not expect this, Mr. Merton," said Kate. "For Heaven's sake, rise; do not bend to one so infinitely inferior to yourself—to one so utterly unworthy of your affections."

"Miss Wallford!" said Merton, in surprise.

"Yes," pursued Kate, "I say unworthy of your affections, for, alas! you have given your heart to one who can offer you nothing in return but her gratitude. Forgive me, Mr. Merton, but strive, oh! strive to forget me. I will love and esteem you as I have always done, as a friend and a brother, but I can do nothing more. I feel honoured by your avowal—honoured that a poor and friendless girl like myself should be thought worthy of the affections of so gifted and accomplished a person."

"Oh! Miss Wallford," resumed Merton, "is there no chance of your ever unsaying those words? Will time not render me less repulsive to you than I am at present?"

"Repulsive you have never been, Mr. Merton, and I beg you will at once disabuse your mind of that erroneous impression. I should be wrong, however, if I were deceiving you, and holding out prospects which may never be realised. Respect and esteem you I shall always do, but we have no control over our affections."

"Then farewell for ever," said Merton, taking hold of Miss Wallford's hand.

"Heaven forbid that it should be for ever," said Kate. "Why will you not visit us as usual? I am sure mamma, and Fred, and I will be as glad to see you as we have always been."

"I am sure you will, Miss Wallford. I owe you many thanks for your kindness, but absence is necessary to enable me to erase the impression you have made upon my heart. I shall leave this place almost immediately. Farewell," he added. "Remember me to Mrs. Wallford and Fred, whom I, perhaps, may never see again;" and taking Kate's hand once more, he pressed it to his lips and departed.

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

XLII.

When, under the severe rule which Jaques Molay introduced into the Temple, D'Aulnoy had been compelled to forego his visits to Margot, his seeming forgetfulness, notwithstanding her struggles to banish the thought of his inconstancy, weighed upon her mind. Long did she combat the idea. Almeric, so unlike his thoughtless or hard-hearted companions, who had shown himself so susceptible of home affections, could not crush with a careless foot the flower he had culled. But as day after day, and week after week went by without his making his appearance, the notion of her abandonment was no longer to be subdued.

In the first paroxysm of grief, when she fairly grasped this hypothesis, Margot gave way to despair with all her former impetuosity; but experience and misfortune had taught her their lessons, and soon a subdued sorrow succeeded to the violent outbreak of her first emotion.

It was during this calm that Pernelle, by Nicholas's desire, sought her out; but Margot, having from behind her window seen her approach and stop at the house-door, and being in no humour to entertain her former rival, charged her landlady to say that she had left her lodging in company with her cousin, the king's forester, and to plead ignorance as to her present retreat. A few days later, she descried Roger himself prying about her abode, evidently with a view to surprise her. Being convinced by this circumstance that her *ruse* had been suspected, Margot remained entirely secluded within her chamber, revolving in her mind the means of defeating her relations' vigilance.

Her grief was too absorbing to permit her to reflect upon a matter which would have afforded room for thought; namely, by what agency her retreat, which was known to few but herself and Almeric, and had been carefully hidden from the Flamels, had been discovered by the latter; for she knew Raoul too well to suppose that the idea of spying her movements had originated with him. She only thought of the fact itself, and only reflected on the way to escape its consequences. There was but one place sacred to the inquisitorial, worldly eye—the convent of Maubuisson was still open to her; its walls would shelter alike her shame and her sorrow, and thither she determined to repair.

But Roger, whether weary of his self-imposed task, or satisfied that his cousin no longer resided in the house under his *surveillance*, after a few days appeared before it no more. His absence afforded Margot relief; still, the idea of taking refuge at Maubuisson, once conceived, was nurtured in her mind. Indeed, the convent seemed the only resource left her.

One morning as, preparatory to putting her plan into execution, she

was peering from the window to ascertain if no one lurked in the street who might impede or report her movements, her landlady burst into the apartment, and abruptly announced the startling intelligence—which was, she said, bruited all over Paris—that the king had invested the Temple with troops, and arrested all the knights; with the somewhat exciting amplification of his having thrown all the demons and magicians, which were kept in the Temple for the private amusement of the community, into chains, and led them away captive with the brotherhood.

At this news a sudden revulsion took place in Margot's bosom. A something more powerful than reason told her that Almeric was innocent of the crime wherewith, in her heart, she had charged him—that interests more vital than his own had absorbed his every faculty, and had alone kept him from her side at a time when every moment must be devoted to his Order. The Templars arrested!—all of them!—what! without striking a blow! and Almeric was so brave! How powerful must be the king, she thought, and under what powerful motives must he have acted! But then his justice, she knew, was terrible! He would not have proceeded to so bold a step if it was not his intention to go further; and Margot, scarcely daring to glance at the future shadowed forth by the terrible present, felt that Almeric was lost if no protecting power interposed to save.

All thought of Maubuisson was now discarded; and her ingenuity was at work to bring to light every possible means of saving her lover. Her first care was to discover his place of confinement. Muffling herself, one afternoon, in what disguise she could find, she mingled with the crowds that swarmed the streets during the royal *fêtes*, listening to all that was said around her, and carefully examining each face that passed by, in the hope of meeting some one who might be able to furnish her with the desired information. But her eye encountered none but strange countenances, and her ear drank in nothing but the king's praises—for at that moment he was ministering to the pleasure of the Parisians—observations on the liberality of his guests, the splendour of his entertainment, and the many good things that were greedily devoured by the people from his table after the royal repasts.

Preoccupied with one thought, there was something sickening to Margot in this levity. She could not conceive how men, when so great a misfortune seemed to threaten, could walk, and talk, and act, and be susceptible of amusement with ordinary indifference; and turning from the crowded thoroughfares, she sought in one of the dark, unfrequented alleys, some accordance with her own humour.

At the further extremity of this alley a torch—for the day was on the wane—over a doorway indicated an hostelry. It flared gloomily in the narrow lane, throwing a red light on the door-steps and the opposite house, and leaving the space beyond in comparative obscurity. As Margot was passing beneath it, she suddenly encountered a man muffled in a dark rider's cloak, creeping cautiously along, as if he dreaded nothing so much as recognition. But, in spite of the care with which he strove to conceal his features, Margot knew him at a glance, and fearlessly accosted him.

Consternation, not unmixed with terror, for a moment rooted him to the spot; but immediately recovering himself, he made a motion as if to

pass on his way, hoping that the young girl was mistaken in his identity. But not one of those who had visited Nicholas's abode on that, to her, eventful day of the Carnival, could, under any circumstances, be forgotten by Margot. Finding evasion useless, and feeling that he had nothing to fear from his present interlocutor, Jaques de Troyes—for that individual seemed to think the purlieus of Paris a safer asylum, in the actual aspect of affairs, than the open country—imparted to Margot what information he had been able to collect respecting the different prisons assigned to the Templars, which fortunately included that of Almeric.

But though Margot now knew in what tower her lover was confined, she was, in fact, no more advanced than when she remained in ignorance of its locality. She could sit day after day despairingly gazing on the sombre walls, but that was all; an impassable barrier was between her and him she would have given worlds to see, if only for a moment, to let him know that at least one sympathising heart beat so near and yet so far from him. Her earnest entreaty to be allowed admission to his cell was peremptorily denied; and she soon had occasion to perceive, by the fruitless efforts of Philip d'Aulnoy to gain access to his brother, how vain were all endeavours on her part—how vain her prayers and supplications.

But the obdurate gaoler could not prevent her lingering near the prison. So she sat day after day, week after week, in tearless agony before that frowning gate, exposed to the gaze of every passer-by. Perhaps her history was guessed by some who may have remarked her woe-begone aspect; if so, they felt how unavailing were any attempt at consolation, for none stopped to endeavour to assuage her grief.

Weeks grew to months—winter came; still Margot, notwithstanding the rigour of the season, daily sought that prison-gate, ever hoping that some unlooked-for chance might favour her ardent desire of seeing her unhappy lover. Yet a short time and the warders, for whom she had become an object, not of interest, but of habit, saw her no more.

Broken by the agitation she had undergone, and exposed alternately to the damp and cold, Margot felt indisposed one evening on her return home. By the morning she was in a high fever, which proved to be of the most malignant kind; and for a time she lay balanced between life and death.

Her youth and strength triumphed over the malady, but her convalescence was slow. When she was sufficiently recovered to think of what had occupied her so earnestly previous to her illness, winter was giving way to the first approach of spring, and the balmy air inspired her with renewed courage. So buoyantly does the blood flow in the veins of the young at this season of the year, that hope even visited her bosom. She would at last see Almeric. It was impossible, she thought, that men could be so cruel as to resist any longer an affection so persevering.

One morning as almost joyous with this prospect she was preparing to set out on her way to the prison, crowds, hurrying by her house-door with the eagerness of men bent on some momentous object, for a moment checked her advance. Such a sight was, in those days, of too ordinary occurrence to create alarm; her only care was to enter the throng in such a manner as that she might be borne along with it without incurring any risk. That the motive of their assembling was of more than

common interest, however, could be gathered from sundry exclamations that broke from them confusedly, and the words "Templars!" "Grand Master!" "Sorcery," repeated in every tone from extreme abhorrence to the most perfect indifference, made Margot tremble; but she in vain listened to the Babel of sound for any solution of the mystery.

Instead of proceeding in the direction she wished to take, the crowd streamed over the *Pont au Change* to the island; and soon Margot was borne onward to the extremity of one of the small lanes abutting on Notre-Dame, whence she commanded a clear view of the scaffold and the scene that ensued.

The scream that broke from her when, after so long a separation, she beheld Almeric stand forth and address the crowd, and heard from his own lips how much he had suffered, was drowned by the vociferations of the multitude. Her heart beat with violence at the onward rush that followed—she heeded not her own danger in the impetuous movement—Almeric might yet be saved!

But, alas! that hope soon died within her. Two men on the scaffold are addressing the masses as they advance,—what is it they say? Do the people pause? Can it be that so many men, with the will and the strength to do, convinced of the innocence of the victims, who, but a moment before, had rushed to their rescue, now stand by disputing among themselves, and because two traitors, to save their miserable lives, had blasphemed against their Order, suffer the noble and the pure to be sacrificed on the altar of avarice, injustice, and cruelty? It is even so. The Templars disappear from the scaffold with their oppressors, and Margot, when the returning crowd permitted her to do so, sought her home well-nigh broken-hearted.

She did not witness the tragic episode with which that eventful day closed; but the rumour thereof, with which all Paris rang, penetrated to her lonely abode and roused her from her moody sorrow. So fearful and prompt an issue to the morning's work would not fail to be succeeded by more executions. The grand master and the Prior of Normandy but led the way to death as they had often done to victory—others would follow—perhaps Almeric himself would be the next victim! In the agony of the moment Margot tore her hair and wrung her hands in the very impotency of despair. Burning with the desire to act—to do something, no matter what, to save her lover—she felt herself powerless as an exhausted swimmer carried seaward by an adverse tide.

Whilst thus a prey to the keenest pangs the human heart can know, through the confusion of her thoughts suddenly a light broke and checked her vehement grief. Almeric's brothers were attached to the court—they would intercede in his behalf. But, no!—men know not how to plead such a cause—she would seek out Philip d'Aulnoy—he had spoken kindly to her before that prison-gate—she would seek him now, and on her knees entreat him to obtain her access to the princesses of France. She had once, humble as she was, assisted those haughty dames—they would not withhold their help from her in her need. And had she not more at stake than Almeric's brothers? She feared not openly to plead his cause—was it not her own? She knew that, free from the bonds that bound alike his conscience and his person, he would, in the first hour of liberty, restore her to honour and to happiness. His

regrets at not being able to make her his in the face of God and man had often, when the thought of what might have been but for the adverse hand of fate, wrung her heart, and were yet fresh in her memory. It was, therefore, with no feeling of shame that she determined to prefer her suit, even in the presence of the king, if necessary, being nerved for any trial.

XLIII.

In pursuance of the plan she so hastily formed, and on which she was determined to act, Margot might now be seen, day after day, loitering about the privileged precincts of the palace. Privileged they were in every sense; for this enclosure was a sanctuary where vice and crime of every shade, by a strange anomaly of the times, gathered under the fostering wing of royalty. Was it a type of the divine character then assumed by the crown that no human misery was so deep but it might approach its greatness, and be, as it were, redeemed and comforted by its emanations? Within these sacred limits no bailiff, no officer of the law might penetrate. At this threshold the feuds that sometimes vented their fury in the streets, must pause. Here, too, the *Phrinees* and *Lais* of the capital might laugh the *guet* to scorn; and shoals of mendicants exhibited their real or supposed afflictions, pestering every one who rode in or out of the court. The king himself was no more shocked at coming thus in daily contact with the lowest and most contemned of his subjects than he was at the royal pigeons entering his apartments at will through his unglazed casements. The latter case, indeed, he might remedy with wirework, but he probably thought the former no evil since he sought no means to repress it.

Among this disorderly band Margot spent hours, awaiting with anxiety the moment when chance should throw either of Almeric's brothers in her way. She but rarely caught sight of them, however; when they were so pre-occupied, that any attempt to attract their notice proved abortive. True, her first advances were so timidly made that they might well be passed by unobserved; but when, in her eagerness to press her suit, she overcame her bashfulness, it was only to rush into the opposite extreme.

Espying one morning the two brothers crossing the court with a rapid step, she made towards them with a precipitation that excited the jibes of the loose people who crowded the place. Whether from this circumstance, or some other cause, the two young men avoided her in so marked a manner as to show their reluctance to grant her the desired interview. Margot drew back deeply mortified; but she fancied that she could perceive in their countenances, expressive of doubt and discouragement, that Almeric's fate weighed upon their minds: and if only she could explain the motive of her importunity, she felt certain of a patient hearing.

Trusting that they would be less reserved under cover of dusk, she returned of an evening and lingered every day later in the hope of better success than on the eve. But Philip and Gaultier d'Aulnoy were not in the habit of leaving the palace late; and she was exposed, night after night, to the insults of the passers-by, and of the vagabonds that surrounded her, yet her patience flagged not. Tears of shame and offended pride scalded her cheeks, but she still persisted in her plan.

At last, losing all hope of again seeing the young men in the open court, terrified and sick at heart, she took her post at the foot of that tower to the interior of which she had once been so mysteriously introduced. But here her watch seemed equally vain. Scarce was footfall ever heard in that vicinity, unless some beggar, timid and disheartened like herself, crept by that way.

One dark night, however, as she was revolving in her mind some means to attract the attention of the princesses themselves, a tall figure, wrapped in a dark cloak, whose spurs, jingling as he trod, betrayed his knightly degree, passed the spot where she stood. He seemed aware of her presence, and willing to pierce through the darkness in order to recognise her. Whether or no he was satisfied as to her identity she could not discover; but he betrayed obvious vexation at finding her there. Striding impatiently backwards and forwards, he seemed lingering in the expectation she would give way. Tired at length of pacing up and down, he advanced towards her, and in an authoritative voice exclaimed:

"What art doing there? Begone!—yet stay, for whom dost thou tarry?"

"I wish earnestly to see a squire or a page of the princesses, Messires d'Aulnoy by name," said Margot with trepidation, feeling that if she neglected this moment no such opportunity might again occur. "I would humbly crave a favour at their hands."

"I thought so," said the knight; and he added in a confidential whisper: "You would be introduced into the tower through this door?"

"I know not," replied Margot, confused at her interlocutor's manner.

"Were you never here before, maiden? You speak to one who knows the premises well, and can open most of the doors."

"I certainly was here once before," said Margot, with hesitation.

"In this tower?"

"Even so, messire."

"At whose summons, I pray you?—to see whom?"

"If you are of the palace, Sir Knight, you might know well enough."

"The princesses?" he whispered.

"I cannot deny it."

"And again you expect the brothers D'Aulnoy to introduce you?" said the knight, musingly.

"I thought they alone were acquainted with this secret entrance," said Margot, "because they seemed so mysterious about it; but if you, noble sir, have power to conduct me to the princesses, for the Virgin's sake grant me that boon. Do not hesitate—the life of a D'Aulnoy is at stake; it surely cannot be indifferent to those whose protection I would implore."

"You do the princesses but justice," said her interlocutor; "but if I cannot introduce you to all three, which of them do you think most likely to further your views—to take an interest in the fate of this young man?"

"The Queen of Navarre," was the unhesitating answer.

The knight seemed to reflect a moment, muttering something between his teeth which was inaudible to Margot; then said aloud:

"This day fortnight, at the same hour, I shall be again here—attend

likewise, and you shall see and speak to the princesses. Remember, this day fortnight;" and the knight passed on his way.

There was something in the intonation of his last words that inspired fear rather than hope. Margot's heart sank within her, she scarce knew why, for there was nothing in the words themselves to create alarm. Was it that she had another fortnight to wait before she could obtain her object? After some reflection she thought so. In her former state of uncertainty each hour might end her torment; but now a fortnight, every day of which would be an age of anxiety, must pass away before she could attain her aim, and ere its expiration Almeric's fate might be decided.

XLIV.

THE longed-for day came at last; and an hour before the time appointed by the stranger, Margot stood at the foot of the tower, anxiously listening to every sound that might indicate his approach. Although he was perfectly unknown to her, there was something in his manner which spoke of power and authority; and she doubted not for an instant his ability to introduce her to the princesses. She had often wondered, during the last fortnight, why he had postponed a favour on which so much depended, when, being on the spot, he could so conveniently to himself have granted it at the moment when it was desired; and she now trembled lest the high-born noble should have forgotten altogether an appointment made with a humble burgher maiden.

Her fear was, however, groundless. Precisely at the hour he had himself named the knight made his appearance, and without exchanging a greeting with the young girl, strode at once to the door, which opened at his touch.

"Ascend boldly," he said—"I can do no more; and," added he, with a strange laugh, "receive my thanks for having informed me of that which it most imported me to know. Trust me, I have turned that information to account!" So saying, he turned on his heel and departed, leaving Margot confused at his words, and uncertain how to act.

The princesses, unusually grave and pensive, were sitting in the chamber above. Jeanne of Burgundy's pale face was bent over an embroidery-frame, but her fingers played idly with the silks without bringing them into shape. Marguerite's eyes were bent upon her thoughtfully, whilst Blanche's lids had so long drooped it might have been thought she was asleep.

"You seem to have caught the infection of the king's humour, fair sister," said Marguerite, at length addressing Jeanne; "you are well-nigh as thoughtful as himself."

Jeanne did not immediately reply, when a sigh escaped her, and she said: "Yes—the king—I mistrust him strangely."

"So do I," said Blanche. "I have felt unusual awe in his presence ever since——;" and she pointed with her finger towards the islet which the window commanded.

"The king has not been himself since that event," said Marguerite, thoughtfully; "nor do I suppose he ever will be."

"His temper is more uncertain than ever," said Jeanne, shaking her

head dubiously. "I like not the looks he casts at us. I fear me they bode us no good; for myself I dread nothing; my hereditary lands and people will prove my shield."

"And yet, Jeanne," said Marguerite, riveting her expressive eyes on her cousin's face—"and yet if there be guilt among us it lies at your door. I may have been coquettish, Blanche silly; but you, Jeanne—you have set us an example of recklessness."

"Ay, but I have been prudent," replied Jeanne, with a cold smile; "of my favourite there remains no vestige."

"The king has granted free pardon to Montfaucon for his voluntary revelations," said Marguerite.

"True; but for form sake, and for the sake of his own safety, which is menaced by the few Templars who escaped, and also, perhaps, that his revelations might be brought to bear against those who are caught, he has been incarcerated with the rest of them. Flirtation with a Templar, Marguerite, was safer than with a humble squire."

"To end with his being burnt alive!" said the princess, shuddering.

"Are you quite sure," said Jeanne, with a shrug, "that the squire and page incur no risk?"

"If I thought he was in any danger," said Marguerite, "I would dismiss my squire forthwith."

"And I my page," said Blanche.

"You brought no dowers," said Jeanne, coldly; "your sons have not had the luck to live. I think you would act wisely in so doing."

"We must think seriously of making peace with our husbands," said Blanche.

Jeanne shook her head. "It is strange," she observed, musingly, "but the king's sons, though most unlike each other, have all something of their father; and that very something is against your hope, Blanche."

"True," said Marguerite. "Your husband has the king's wisdom, Blanche's his beauty, and mine," she added, with an upward glance, "mine has his inflexible heart and his cruel temper."

"Then, my dear sisters," said Jeanne, "it is a thing decided—the squire and the page will be dismissed no later than to-day, and we will grow grave and solemn, as all around us have become since the eleventh of March."

"You are right, Jeanne," said Marguerite; "the times are growing serious. Philip must depart—perhaps things are better so. Ah! had my hand been free I might have been mad enough to bestow the daughter of Agnes of France upon a simple gentleman of Normandy!"

"Would you?" said Jeanne, with a sneer.

"You would not, I know," said Marguerite; "you can deceive, but you cannot love. Blanche, poor child, knows neither hate nor love, nor sin, nor temptation—she is but a silly moth that has burnt its wings at the flame of bad example."

"What am I to do?" said Blanche; "give me some advice, Jeanne; for if our cousin has the better heart, you have the better head."

"If your fair Charles teases you too much, *ma petite*, plead too close affinity, the nullity of the marriage vow, and retire into a convent—a merry one though—Maubuisson, for instance. It were no hard penance,

for a princess of France will enjoy more freedom inside its walls than within these grey towers, I promise you. Then, you know," added Jeanne, passing her fingers over her sister's head, "in less than a year, if the Martyr, as Jaques Molay is called, was gifted with prophecy, we shall have little to dread from the king."

A slight noise behind the tapestry at this moment attracted their attention. It was gently moved aside, and a female figure, closely wrapped in a dark woollen garment, with the hood drawn over her face, entered the chamber. As she timidly advanced she threw back the hood, and exposed to view features that were not unknown to the princesses. She waited for a sign of encouragement; but Jeanne of Burgundy gazed at her in displeased surprise, the Queen of Navarre with anxiety, and the Princess Blanche with the pouting lip of one who is intruded upon at an unwelcome moment. Margot perceived the unfavourable impression her uncalled-for presence had created; but, overcoming the feeling of awe which their frown inspired, she drew nearer, and sinking on one knee, entreated forgiveness for having thus forced herself upon them.

"I have," she added, looking up into the Princess Marguerite's face, that expressed less displeasure than the others, "watched days and nights for an opportunity to speak with Messires d'Aulnoy, but I could never attract their attention."

"And what would you attract their attention for, mignonne?" said Marguerite, somewhat sternly.

"To obtain the audience of you, gracious lady, which chance has, at last, brought about—my prayers have not been in vain—I thought you would perhaps remember me, and that your heart would melt at my entreaties."

"Truly," said the Princess Jeanne, her countenance losing some of its sternness, "those are the bright eyes and raven tresses that found favour with a certain Templar—do you remember, fair sister?" she said, turning to Blanche, whose heightened colour betrayed her consciousness of her sister's allusion. "However, your cheeks are paler and your eyes more dim than when we last saw you," added Jeanne, casting a cold, scrutinising look at the suppliant at her feet.

"And is it of this same Templar you would speak?" demanded Marguerite, encouragingly.

"Is he still alive?" added Jeanne, carefully stitching the leaf of a rose —"loads of them have perished on the rack—art sure he was not among them?"

"He lives, gracious lady—he lives!" exclaimed Margot, with energy, clasping her hands. "Oh! if ever——"

"Let there be no mention of Templars here!" interrupted Blanche, with trepidation. "For the Virgin's sake begone, maiden—thy suit is hopeless."

"But he is a D'Aulnoy!" persisted Margot, restraining with difficulty her tears that almost choked her; "his brothers are your faithful servants."

"There thou art mistaken, wench," said the Princess Jeanne, sharply; "they have presumed too much on the indulgence and the kindness of their royal mistresses, and are about to be dismissed from their service altogether."

Blanche cast a look at her sister and at Marguerite, which seemed to say, "What admirable presence of mind!" and then glanced at the young girl to see the impression these awful words would make upon her.

"There is, then, no succour!—no hope!" said Margot, her arms falling by her side.

"What hope wouldst thou?—What interest canst thou take in so vile a thing as a Templar?" said the Princess Jeanne, sternly. "If thou hast dared to entertain affection for a soldier of the cross, thou must be bold indeed to taint our ears with such a confession."

Margot's blood froze in her veins, and she hung her head in mute shame upon her breast. The Queen of Navarre's dark eyes filled with tears, and approaching the young girl, she said gently:

"Leave us, my poor maiden; the intercession you would at our hands is utterly impossible, and your presence here will only reveal the existence of the secret staircase—commit us without aiding you. Withdraw as quietly as you came. Believe me, no tears—no entreaties can avail you; the Templars are lost, one and all:—but remember," she added, still more gently, "that sin may be expiated by sorrow and repentance."

"What ugly words are those," said Blanche, "sin and sorrow!—I wonder why such things are permitted in this world—it would be so pleasant without them!"

But the Queen of Navarre's soft manner revived Margot from the stunning effect of Jeanne's cold severity and Blanche's indifference. She forced her tears back to their source, and, rising, was about to pour forth her grief in a last appeal, when a page in the royal livery hastily flung aside the tapestry, and cried out in a somewhat tremulous voice, "The king!"

Philip entered at the moment: he was very pale.

"Ha!" he said, his eye lighting instantly upon Margot. "Who's this?—what have we here?—some new favourite in disguise?"

"No, sire," said Margot, again throwing herself on her knees, seized with a sudden resolution and nerved to her task by the energy of despair; "alas! no favourite, but a humble maiden, who once before knelt at your grace's feet, and who still trusts in your mercy."

"Mercy! in favour of what, or whom?" said the king, sharply.

"Maiden, thou art mad!" exclaimed the Queen of Navarre, seizing Margot by the arm and endeavouring to raise her—"thou art mad thus to importune his grace—depart through yon door;" pointing to that by which the king had entered—"thou wilt find some one to let thee out."

But Margot retained her suppliant posture. "I must speak, princess," she said; "a life is at stake."

"What life?" said the king—"speak, maiden, I enjoin thee."

The princesses, who had all risen at the king's entrance, now grouped themselves about Margot. Blanche and the Queen of Navarre could not conceal their agitation, nor did it escape the shrewd monarch. Jeanne alone preserved her coolness, seeming quite unconcerned at the young girl's presence in that chamber, who could only have approached it through the secret entrance; and yet on her the king riveted his piercing eye.

"You had better, sire, not listen to her petition," said the Princess

Marguerite, imploringly—" it will only anger you, and I know you will not grant it."

" At least I will hear her," said the king; " proceed, maiden."

Margot, rapidly reflecting that the word Templar might grate painfully on the king's ear and cause the rejection of her suit at once, thought of mollifying him by a name more familiar and less hateful.

" I would entreat your grace's pardon for a D'Aulnoy, sire," she repeated, passionately clasping her hands.

The princesses had hoped she would have fallen into the error she had avoided, and Jeanne with difficulty restrained her anger.

" There were two brothers of that name," said the king, coldly—" for which of them wouldst thou intercede? for the page of the Princess Blanche of France, or for the Queen of Navarre's squire? Both are now beyond my power, maiden—they were flayed alive this very morning."

With a shriek Blanche fell to the floor. Marguerite with difficulty refrained from fainting, and grasped the back of her chair for support."

" Is this news to you, fair daughters?" said the king, with a savage expression about eye and lip. " Yet, well aware that your greatest pleasure consisted in gazing from the casement of this dull palace, I had given orders that their carcases should be dragged along the quay to afford you a sight that would enliven your monotonous existence. It appears I was mistaken—perhaps, for once, you were at chapel."

" You are pleased to trifle with us, sire," said the Princess Jeanne, with severity. " The poor servants of your grace's household can never have given rise to so much displeasure."

" Can they not, think you, fair daughter?" said the king, smiling blandly upon her.

" Surely," said Princess Marguerite, scarce able to articulate from the excess of her emotion—" surely, sire, you only mean to frighten us?"

A sudden change came over the countenance of Philip—he could contain himself no longer.

" Frighten you! No!—it was a vain attempt to see if any spark of repentance could be struck out of your guilty souls. Touch not that woman! he said, sternly, to Margot, as she attempted to raise the Princess Blanche, whose head in her fall had struck against the edge of her sister's tapestry-frame, and now bled profusely from a cut in the temples; " touch her not, I say!—it were well if she die in her shame. The royal princes of France, my own fair sons, were fit subjects, forsooth, to be deceived and mocked by idle wantons! And did you think such indignity could be borne? Did you think my eye was not on you! But the honour of France has been partly avenged in the blood of your paramours. Yours is too noble to be shed in the street—the scutcheons of France and Burgundy on the skirts of your robes shield the false hearts they cover. But prepare to proceed immediately to a place where you will have leisure to repent and school your souls for a better world—to the court of France you will never return."

" I cannot suppose that I am included in this sentence, sire?" said Jeanne of Burgundy, with ashy pallor, and a look of defiance.

" You!" He riveted upon her a withering gaze.

" Yes, I!" continued the princess, proudly; " because if my presence is

no longer desirable at this court, I beg to be returned to my liege vassals, who, I doubt not, will be glad to see me back again among them, and able," she added, drawing herself up with dignity, "to protect me if need be."

"Your vassals! You forget that your lands were annexed to the crown of France at your marriage."

"Do not imagine, sire, that my subjects will leave me or my sister unreclaimed at your hands. I know," continued the princess, haughtily, "we have given mortal offence to the crown of France—our sons have not lived—we have but daughters. Other princesses—other heiresses, to bring forth male issue, and attach fresh provinces to the crown, were, doubtless, an agreeable exchange for those who have proved so unworthy; but believe me, sire, our people will never suffer it."

"Serpent!" exclaimed the king, fixing on her a glance of rage and contempt. "As thou art the boldest, so art thou the worst! In the solitude of Château-Gaillard, cherishing the remembrance of your presumptuous minion's well deserved fate, you will have time to learn how to pray instead of devising mischief to beguile your idle hours."

"And will our fair sister of England accompany us to that charming retreat?" said the Princess Jeanne, with a contemptuous curl of the lip.

Had not the timely vision of a war with Artois and Burgundy sprung up in Philip's mind, he could have slain her where she stood: but even in his wildest hour of passion the man was merged in the sovereign.

"May we not at least see our children ere we go?" pleaded the Queen of Navarre, clasping his knees. "For my own part, I am content to die in solitude and exile; the court—the world—were henceforth odious to me; but let me not depart without taking leave of my children."

"Would that the brood were in hell!" exclaimed the king, giving full vent to his violence towards one whom no prudential considerations bound him to spare. But presently commanding himself, and resuming the cool, ironical manner with which he had veiled his anger on his first entrance, he turned to Margot:

"And thou, maiden—what wouldst thou more? I bethink me there is a third brother of that hopeful family—is it for him thou wouldst plead? Likely enough, for I remember thee now—but trust me spare thy breath; for if I could inflict a thousand deaths he should die them all! Is he not a D'Aulnoy and a Templar? Go to, maiden—thou knowest not what thou demandest—withdraw by the secret door through which thou didst enter this apartment—retire before it be walled up never again to give free passage to the adventures of the princesses of France. Hast thou not heard me, maiden? Begone! Thou wert quick enough to enter a short time since when Prince Charles opened the door—it is unnecessary to be over-scrupulous now. Go—and speak of what thou hast heard and seen this night to no living mortal at thy peril."

Margot mechanically obeyed; but how she reached the bottom of the stairs and passed to the outer air, she knew not. Her faltering steps involuntarily led her to the steps of the chapel, where, sinking on the flags she remained in a state of stupor bordering on unconsciousness. A dim vision of the prostrate form of Blanche, the crimson tide staining the lilies of France on her robe, and dabbling her golden tresses of Mar-

guerite's look of wild agony—of Princess Jeanne's scornful pride—of the king's fury—of the tortured brothers D'Aulnoy—of the irrevocable sentence passed on Almeric—a confused sensation of mingled pain and bewilderment was all that remained of the scene.

She was roused from her torpor by the sound of workmen occupied in walling up the door of the tower, through which she had obtained access to it; and she became aware that the court was filled with horsemen. Three palfreys with ladies' pillions were in the midst, and presently three females, the last who should ever pass through that secret entrance from which she saw them emerge, were silently lifted upon them. Though they were enveloped from head to foot in sable veils, Margot fancied she could distinguish the slender yet erect forms of the Princesses Marguerite and Jeanne through the thick folds. A light figure sprang up behind the third lady, who evidently could not support herself on her steed.

When the court of the palace ceased to re-echo to the horses' hoofs, the masons resumed their work, which the princesses' departure had interrupted.

Not until daybreak, when the *concierge du palais* re-opened its portals, could Margot leave its hated precincts. Her senses were so confused she might have believed all that had passed the previous night was but a feverish dream, the result of over-excitement; but the people, as they hurried out at that early hour upon their various avocations, seemed to forget everything else but the fearful execution that had taken place the day before on the brothers D'Aulnoy, the cause of which, though but vaguely bruited about, was discussed with tolerable accuracy. The accusations against the princesses, and the cruel fate of their supposed paramours, however, seemed to weigh less upon their minds than a sort of growing terror at the king's humour. Utterly despairing now of saving her lover's life, and heart-stricken at the horrid fate of his brothers—deprived of the last hope that had supported her through months of trial—Margot prayed for death, but it came not.

XLV.

Though the succour afforded Nicholas by Peter of Boulogne relieved his anxieties with regard to the pressure of want, uneasiness of another kind began to prey upon his mind. The winter passed in the forest, in spite of Pernelle's tender care, had told painfully on Dame Flamel, whose querulous complaints at the unavoidable discomforts of her situation had gradually given way to a sullen silence which gave serious alarm to her son.

As the spring broke, however, she sensibly changed for the better. The balmy air seemed to gladden her. She would sit for hours outside the cottage-door with Pernelle and Ursula by her side, the forest flowers throwing their scent around, the underwood gently waving its new verdure, the birds filling the woods with their joyous melody; and there she would grumble in her old discontented way, and wonder when her trials would cease.

These were welcome symptoms to Nicholas. Nevertheless, something must be done. He would not condemn his aged parent to pass another winter at the hut; and if at the close of the summer danger should still

threaten in Paris, he was determined to profit by Peter of Boulogne's recommendation and remove to Bethune.

If, however, he would put this plan into execution, it became necessary to visit, at least once before his departure, his domicile in Paris. His absence from the capital might be long—perhaps for years; and his winter's experience had told him how insupportable life would be in a strange town where he would be wholly unknown, without a single manuscript, and especially without that precious document whose study was so all-important to him. He reflected long upon the means of accomplishing his wishes, and at length determined to avail himself once more of Roger's assistance.

But whilst the stillness around the hut was only broken by some adventurous roe bounding through the copse, great events were taking place in Paris. A gloom hung over the city. The grand master of the Templars and the Dauphin of Auvergne had perished at the stake; and Roger, who undertook to execute Nicholas's commission and ascertain if his house continued to be watched—the more readily, perhaps, that he hoped no longer to find any hindrance to the departure of one who knew so little how to appreciate the noble art of venery—returned with the intelligence that all surveillance had ceased; there was no obstacle to their return to town; witnesses were no longer sought after or desired; judgment had been pronounced, the sentence executed.

Though this news had been in some sort expected, it fell like a thunderbolt upon the party at the hut. Even Dame Flamel was unwontedly agitated. To do her justice, though she regarded the whole host of Templars as her bitterest enemies, she crossed herself piously and murmured a prayer for the illustrious victims. Having done which, however, she resumed her seat, and drew a long breath with the feeling of one who is relieved of a great anxiety. She might now return to her own beloved home! Why linger any longer in the forest? Had they not had enough of it? It was well for those who, like Roger and Ursula, were born to it; but if Nicholas would keep her in this world he had better take heed how he made her spend such another winter. Nicholas, however, who had his own plans, still replied, "Let us wait, mother, and watch events."

The town had now irresistible fascination for Roger. He became as assiduous in his visits to it as he had formerly been in his pursuit of Margot. For the next three months scarcely a week passed without his going three or four times in quest of news, or the still more exciting stimulant derived from witnessing those scenes of horror from which gentler humanity shrinks. The sacrifice on the Isle St. Louis was followed up with more executions. In all directions these lugubrious fires lighted up the town at distant intervals during the summer. On one day no less than fifty-two Templars perished on the same pile opposite the Quay St. Augustin, and elsewhere blackened spaces and smouldering ashes showed where overnight victims had been committed to the flames.

Sick at heart, Roger, each time, brought his doleful news to the hut, imparting his own gloomy feelings to its occupants. Nicholas had no resentment left for men who had made so fearful an expiation, and even Dame Flamel began to think that wickedness had met its reward.

Towards the close of that summer, however, the king's severity seemed to relax. Burning piles were more rarely seen by the paralysed population, until they ceased altogether, and men spoke of the Templars as an Order that had been, and was never to rise again.

Nothing seemed now to hinder Nicholas's resuming possession of his house in town. Accordingly, after tendering his warmest thanks to Roger and Ursula for their unremitting kindness during his stay at the hut, and accompanying them with a large donation from Peter of Boulogne's gift, which, in spite of their reluctance, he forced them to accept, he took his leave; and not without some regret on Pernelle's part, to whose quiet nature this forest life presented a novel charm, the family set out on their way to Paris.

Great was the surprise of the neighbours when the deserted dwelling in the street of the scriveners again showed signs of habitation—when the window-shutters were thrown open and Nicholas's pale face again appeared at the casement, and Pernelle, placid as ever, was observed going to and from the house in her domestic avocations, or on her way to church—when the board announcing the interesting fact to the passer-by that here a deed might be drawn up, or a manuscript copied, again swung over the door. Few, however, seemed to need the services of Nicholas's pen; but this circumstance was, for the present, of little moment, the state of his finances being such as, with proper economy, to ensure his family against want for some time to come.

But, alas! that economy, so all-important now, was the first thing lost sight of. Nicholas's passion, which had in great measure been restrained by the want of those means which he now so amply commanded, began to sprout anew. He spent his gold lavishly on materials for the furtherance of that speculative study which had become to him the better portion of his existence; and Peter of Boulogne's gold rapidly melted away in the alchemist's crucible.

Still but few employers came to make up the deficit, and his labour at his crucible was as unproductive as ever. In vain did he study with assiduity Canches's manuscript; between him and that metal he so ardently sought there seemed to be no affinity or sympathy, for neither in one shape or the other would it flow towards him, nor could he keep it when chance threw it in his way.

Thus their return home was unmarked by any cheering influence. The absorbed Nicholas and his querulous mother, as they sat together round the evening fire,—for the season had become chill, and old Dame Flamel declared she felt getting colder every day,—seemed to cast sombre shadows on the dark walls. Pernelle's mild countenance, with its ever placid smile and kind eyes, was the only ray of sunshine which glided into the silent dwelling, and played through its gloom the more effectively, perhaps, from contrast. Like a pearl of price encased within the oyster-shell, none appeared conscious of her intrinsic value, least of all Dame Flamel, who, in her heart, had never forgiven her daughter-in-law for the disappointment she had given her in bringing, as she coarsely expressed it, but one mouth more to feed upon the family indigence, instead of the affluence of which she was expected to be the medium. And if, as she often thought and sometimes said, a portionless wife had

been an object, Margot, whom she had known and had about her from her infancy, would have done better than any other.

She noticed not the hand that so softly piled up the cushions in her old oaken chair, shielded the light from her weak eyes, kept the draught from her, and prepared her soup at the wonted hour; nor the care that anticipated every want which it was in the power of affection within the limited compass of their means to gratify.

But Pernelle had a silent footfall, and an unobtrusive manner; her voice was low, and but seldom heard. There was not in her the ebb and flow of sentiment and humour which distinguished the passionate Margot. She could minister to the wants of her absorbed husband and his ungracious mother, a task under which Margot's impulsive nature would have sunk; for she required a responsive chord to those which vibrated so powerfully within her own bosom. But Pernelle's self-reliance and self-control permitted her to live for others and to forget herself.

If, however, Dame Flamel sometimes obtruded her regrets of Margot in an unamiable manner upon her little circle, it is much to be feared the latter was altogether forgotten by Nicholas, who soon had no thought but for what his limited world—the walls of his laboratory—contained.

XLVI.

One gusty, autumnal night—just such a night as that which two years before had brought Almeric d'Aulnoy for the first time to that house — Dame Flamel, Nicholas, and Pernelle sat around their fire, plunged, according to their wont of late, in deep meditation.

Nicholas's bright, thoughtful eyes, seemed to seek in the capricious flickerings of the flames the existence of those unknown powers or spirits which he perpetually strove to evoke; and again and again did he examine, in all its bearings, the intricate question what the component parts of gold might be. Was the secret, after all, merely the action of certain acids upon the baser metals under given circumstances of heat and pressure? or was it to be sought neither in salt, nor in mineral, nor in metal, in all their various combinations and reactions, but to be traced to its source in the lap of primæval nature? Had the precious metal been generated by the heightened temperature and dissolved state of the elements which marked the first stage of this globe's existence, and was the procreative power of earth no longer equal to so perfect a production?

If these thoughts were in themselves perplexing, and suggestive of contradictory conclusions, they were rendered still more perplexing and contradictory by the imperfect light thrown upon the subject by science in those days. Well might poor Flamel be absorbed!—like another Columbus, he was striving towards an unknown territory, without chart or pilot, and not a star overhead to guide him across the treacherous deep.

As he thus sat, thought elevated his features and glowed in his eyes, and Pernelle, whilst her small foot plied the wheel incessantly, and the flax glided gently through her fingers, now and then stole a well-pleased glance at him. She, too, had her visions. She recapitulated to herself the miraculous workings of fate in so many cases she had heard

of—bethought herself of a miracle attributed to this or that relic, this or that saint—the efficacy of certain vows—the merits of certain pilgrimages. In the simplicity of her heart, her incertitude was great as to which altar should receive her especial vows, and what kind of vow would be most agreeable to Heaven, and not too painful to perform, in order that she might call down, through miraculous intervention, a blessing upon her husband's enterprise. Not that she longed for its brilliant results, but his joy was the sunshine of her existence. She felt towards him as some silly mothers feel for their children—she would pluck the very stars from heaven for him to toy with, if she could always sit by him as now and watch his dreamy face.

Of far different complexion were the meditations of Dame Flamel. She had hoped, and striven, and wished, both for her husband and son, until she had sickened of hope and wearied of wishes. The bitterness of her own heart had taught her the wisdom of Solomon—the vanity of all earthly things, or to speak more correctly, of all earthly expectations. She had learnt the philosophy of age; namely, a certain indifference to a worldly future which she was not likely to see, and a great relish for the passing moments which were likely to be so few. To her the chimney-corner, with these two silent, abstracted figures beneath its canopy, had, of late, seemed dark and lonesome; and an image with bright eyes sparkling with juvenile vivacity, and a voice chatting with thoughtless glee, or accompanying the revolving wheel with some pious hymn, or, pleasanter still, with a long-winded ballad, would rise ever before her mind's eye. All this had been little prized at the time when it was each evening's solace, but had been often missed since it was no longer attainable; and the old woman was now thinking of that gladsome young face and that lightsome step which for years had cheered her dark dwelling. Margot's faults were softened by absence—her petulance, her coquetry, her variable mood were forgotten; nought was remembered but her joyous nature, distance softening the shades and bringing out the lights of her character.

Scarcely a day had passed of late without Dame Flamel reproaching her meek daughter-in-law for having usurped, as she called it, the place of one fairer and more worthy than herself; but without being able to cool the filial solicitude, or weary the kindness of her whom she deemed passive and devoid of feeling because she was devoted and self-denying. She had taken latterly even to dislike resting her eyes on what she called "Pernelle's flat face," because it was not Margot's longed-for and beloved countenance.

For some time past the old dame's wheel had been at rest; but her foot nervously chafed the floor. At last her impatience broke out in words.

"Ah me—ah me!" she exclaimed, between a sigh and a yawn. "If our poor Margot were but here! There would be then something like life in this dull house. The fire would seem brighter as it shone in her bright young face. Pernelle, why don't you sing? Margot used to sing so sweetly when she spun her yarn. Don't you know the complaint of the 'Sire de Coucy,' or 'The Crusader's Song?'"

"I do not," said Pernelle, suddenly roused from her heaven-aspiring meditations by this apostrophe.

"Perhaps it's as well you don't," said the old woman. "I am sure you have a bad voice. Margot's was so sweet! Nicholas—Nicholas, I say! do you remember 'The Lady and her Milk-white Palfrey,' or, 'The Holy Genevieve,' which Margot used to sing?"

But had Nicholas been carved in stone he could not have been more unconscious of ladies white, grey, or black.

"Lord—Lord! to see how his mind goes wool-gathering! Pernelle, why do you let your husband absorb himself so? Margot would not have allowed it had she been in your place; she would have brought him to his senses, I promise you."

"But if he is happier, mother, in forgetting dull realities in bright visions, why should I recal him from them?"

"Oh! I dare say you are fool enough to believe he is going to make a mint of gold for you, and in the mean while you suffer him to neglect his business—the mainstay of life!"

"But, mother, business won't come to him."

"Nonsense! it would come fast enough if he were ready to receive it—but when people come to have something written out he is so absent they leave him and never come again."

"He writes what they tell him."

"Ay—but he never guesses their meaning. They have all the trouble to explain—to arrange their own thoughts. He never suggests anything—never opens a new view on any subject—also, as I say, they never come again. I don't wonder at it; he gets drowsy with looking at you; he catches the infection, I verily believe; why don't you talk? Why haven't you got anything to say? Of course he sits and thinks when he has nothing better to do; of course you are sorry you came here at all—that is, you would be if you knew where else to go."

"Indeed I should not," answered Pernelle, her eyes glancing affectionately at Nicholas's wrapt countenance.

"Ay! but you are angry with me for telling you the truth."

"Never, mother; it is natural that one who has suffered so much as you have, should not always feel easy in her mind."

A meek answer is proverbially efficacious in turning away wrath, and for a time Dame Flamel was silenced; but it was not in her nature to retain the impression long, and after a pause she began afresh.

"What may Margot be about this gusty night, I wonder? Nicholas, where do you think your cousin Margot is just now? Nicholas!—can't you hear your own mother? How long as she been away from us, I say?"

"True, mother—true," said the young man, mechanically giving heed to the authoritative voice that had swayed him all through life, but still pursuing his own train of thought. "Forty days in a melting fire will dissolve most things. Dissolution is death—but after death comes resurrection, and after dissolution comes agglomeration. It is the indestructible principle of life that vivifies nature's changes—do you follow me, mother?" And he fixed his bright orbs on Dame Flamel.

At that moment the old woman caught an arch smile on her daughter-in-law's offending lip.

"Ay—ay," she said, with more than her usual bitterness, "I and your

cousin Margot may be dead and gone—dead and gone for what either of you would care."

"Who says my cousin Margot is dead?" said the young man, suddenly rousing himself. "Who has said that?"

"No one that I know of," said the mother, anxiously. "How strange you are getting, Nicholas! you'll go mad at last—that will be the comfort of my old days! Ah, Pernelle! you have much to answer for."

Another long pause ensued. At last Pernelle, making a desperate effort at conversation, timidly put in:

"This morning I saw a strange sight at St. Jaques la Boucherie."

"What may it be?" inquired Dame Flamel, in a tone rendered more complacent by the prospect of some chat.

"It was a beggar," continued Pernelle—"a lofty figure with a face so sad—so sad—it has haunted me throughout the day. If ever a broken heart was known by the look, surely that man's heart was broken. He stretched forth his hand without a word—but with such a look! His garments were in tatters, his shoes scarcely held to his feet; but withal he looked more fit to wear a crown than the pilgrim's cockle shell—as I looked at him it suddenly struck me that he must be a Templar."

"Very likely," said Dame Flamel—"some of them stole away—never mind—go on, Pernelle."

"Well, each one as he passed dropped something into the hand thus silently extended. He said nothing, merely crossing himself; but when one young girl drew out from her small basket some dried fruit and gave them to him, 'the Virgin and St. Bernard bless you,' escaped him. Was not St. Bernard the patron of the Templars?"

"Ay," said Dame Flamel, "an it were not the devil."

"Well, mother, when I had done my devotions he was standing near the *benitier*. His eyes were intently fixed on some object, I did not at first see what; but on looking about me I perceived another stately figure dressed in rich robes, with a gay baldric across his breast, looking like the squire of some noble house. His eyes were fixed on the mendicant—then each, simultaneously, raised a finger in precisely the same manner, and passed it three times consecutively over his brow. This, I think, must have been a token of recognition, for both left the church on the instant."

"That is no proof."

"Chance taking me an hour later through a lonely street, I saw them both in earnest conversation behind the angle of a wall. On seeing me approach they were disconcerted, and moved off, each taking an opposite direction."

"I hope they may not be hatching mischief against our sovereign lord the king," said the old dame, crossing herself piously. "Great numbers of them have escaped the fagot. Some have been lucky enough to place themselves, under various pretences, in families wholly unsuspicious of their real characters, others have gone back to their fathers' castles; but the greater part of them—if they will not be monks—may well be glad to eat the bread of charity when in their pride they robbed us of our nearest and dearest. It's well they be taught the lesson of humility—I am glad of it."

"If you had seen this poor man you would not say so, I think," said Pernelle. "I saw the king, too, riding by this morning—he is altering fast—he has not the proud bearing he had a few months back."

"Ah! those daughters-in-law of his have broken his heart," said Dame Flamel, pathetically.

"Everybody says he won't live," resumed Pernelle; "perhaps he thinks so himself."

"That," said Dame Flamel, "is a hard case, there's no denying it. However, I am a living proof that one may survive a heart that has many a time been broken—you smile, Pernelle; there's no danger of yours ever breaking, I trow."

Pernelle, who had now fairly exhausted her little budget of news, fell back into her customary silence; whilst Dame Flamel continued to mumble to herself phrases not of the most cheering import.

"Hearts may well break in this world when luck never comes, or comes too late. The thing one has most wished for half a life, will just take place when one has ceased to care for it—when one does not want it—or when one can have no longer any use for it. I am up to all the tricks of fate now—catch me wishing anything! Now supposing the impossible, and that Nicholas find out how to make gold—the thing is absurd on the face of it—well, I should be sure to go off in an apoplectic fit that very instant, that I might not derive any comfort from it. Ah! it is lucky we have another world to look to."

The mumblings grew fainter and fainter, until they ceased altogether. The wind came down the chimney in sudden gusts, or reascended it with a wailing, whistling sound, as if disconsolate spirits were abroad that night. The old woman was just thinking how dismal the churchyard would be at a time like this, when a precipitate knocking at the house-door made all three start to their feet.

"Do you remember—it was exactly on such a night?" said Dame Flamel, awe-stricken, to her son.

"Alas! alas! mother, why will you always allude to what I would fain forget," replied Nicholas; "besides, there is no fear of the Templars now," he added, with a mournful shake of the head.

"The knock is repeated," observed Pernelle. "It may be some one in need of assistance."

"True," said Nicholas; "but Paris is insecure at this hour—however, look through the opening."

"I will go," said Pernelle, leaving the room—"it may be a poor soul in distress."

She soon returned.

"It is but a woman," she said—"she seems feeble, for she leans against the door."

"Are you sure she is alone—has she no companion in the shade of the wall?"

"I think not," replied Pernelle.

Nicholas now went out himself, and presently re-entered the room, followed by a female, whose worn, thin garments seemed but of little avail against the inclemency of the weather. Her figure was tall and spare—her air disturbed. The hood being drawn close over her head at

first hid her features from view, and even when it was thrown back, haggard and wan, they brought to mind no remembrance.

There was, however, something in the stranger, or in her manner, that painfully affected all three; and they remained in suspense watching her every movement. She advanced to the low stool beside the fire, which, by tacit agreement, had remained sacred to Margot's memory ever since her flight, no one having ever attempted to use it. She placed it exactly in the nook Margot most loved; and settling herself upon it extended her thin fingers, blue with cold, towards the grateful heat, and seemed to give herself up to a feeling of unwonted comfort.

"Are you hungry?" said Pernelle, in her sweet voice, observing the stranger's famished look, whilst Nicholas and his mother were absorbed in contemplating her.

The female took no heed of Pernelle's well-meant but inopportune proffer.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, rubbing her hands, "what a nice feeling to be home again!—the well-known chimney-nook—the friendly blaze. Why didn't I find my way back sooner? Where was I going? Ah, I remember—I was looking for that house in the Rue Galilee. Then I have been on the watch for Templars to tell them all about it—true—but I could find none, nor the house, nor the panel. A chalice between two cross-bones that's the mark—where men see that they may know a Temple house—and tortures—and shrieking—and burning—heugh! But his last words were, 'Margot, rest not till you find it'—I thought he would conceal himself there—I don't think so now—I can't find it—I better go home—I was home once before—yes! all the shutters shut—door locked—the neighbours told me they were gone, or dead——"

"Margot, my own dear Margot!" shrieked Dame Flamel, overcome with anguish, whilst Nicholas stood petrified with horror. "Don't you know us? Your cousin Nicholas—Pernelle—myself, your loving old aunt?"

Margot raised her once lustrous but now hollow eyes, and gazed wistfully from one to the other, then shook her head.

"I dare say you may be what you say," she gently answered; "but I don't know you. My memory is become so weak of late, I am afraid, at times, I am ailing here"—pointing to her head—"no, it will rather be here." She put her hand to her heart.

"Food and rest, and proper care are what she most needs," observed Pernelle, seeing how great was the shock to her husband and her mother-in-law. Nicholas shook his head, and approaching Margot, attempted, in a soothing voice, to recal her to herself and surrounding objects.

"Now you have again found your home, Margot," he said, "you must leave it no more; we will tend and love you like the most beloved of sisters."

"I can't stay with you," she said, in a somewhat hurried and flighty manner. "Almeric is rich now—he has a right to all that money—he is free, and we are going to get married, so you see King Philip has not done so badly after all."

"My poor, poor Margot," said Nicholas, soothingly; "forget that episode of your life. Have you no love left for your poor old aunt, who sobs so bitterly, and Pernelle, and your cousin Nicholas, who has sought

you everywhere, and has so longed to meet you again, have you no affection left for him?"

"I don't know what my cousin would have of me—does he want to marry me? It was once spoken of—but my head is so confused. It's lucky I did not wed him. I never should have known what it is to be loved. I might have loved him, and been most wretched. He didn't know how to love, but the Templar perils soul and body for a woman. That's love!"

"It is the love of a heathen," said Pernelle, piously crossing herself. "A true Christian will peril his soul for nothing of earthly mould."

"Ay, but he would to learn how to make gold," said Margot, slyly.

"Oh, Margot!" said the old woman between her sobs, "don't you remember me, your poor old aunt?"

"My poor old cross aunt? To be sure I do. I once wished—oh, how I wished to be with her again! but that is long ago, when I was sad, and used to weep all day. That's gone by. I never weep now. Ha! if I could but weep! The tears sear my brain inwardly. You all seem very happy, for you can weep. How pleasant! What a relief!"

"Do you never pray?" said Pernelle.

"I try sometimes, but prayers won't come. I oftener sing and laugh."

"Holy Virgin, thou hast tried this frail vessel beyond its strength," said Dame Flamel, raising her hands to heaven.

"Don't you know a single hymn?" said Pernelle, anxious to divert the sufferer's thoughts into what she conceived to be the only channel of earthly consolation.

"Oh, I know many pretty songs; *he* taught me some of his own dear Normandy, which he loved so well." She began a boatman's song. "That's not it;" she shook her head, for her voice could keep steady to no melody—"that's not it. I am always haunted by certain sounds, and can remember no other; and yet those sounds, you know, make me wild, but they are like the spirit within me. I must sing them at times whether I will or no;" and she began a low solemn strain. "That should be a psalm," she said, suddenly interrupting herself; "the grand master, they say, sang it on the island. But *he* did not sing it—they were fifty-two in all—Craon, Folleville, Narsac, the traitor! Ha! it was well done. But there is one—one—who may he be—pale with the torture? I should know him—he averts his head—he will not let me see him. They ascend the pile; *he* cannot be among them, he told me he was going into distant lands—into banishment. Has he deceived me? But why should he? Ah, I remember. They, too, sing."

She then began, in a low tone, another psalm, still more impressive than the former.

"Margot, cease!" exclaimed Flamel, seizing both her hands, and fixing on her a steady gaze, for he saw a wild excitement fast lighting up her eyes—"I command you to desist."

"Margot, you break my heart!" exclaimed Dame Flamel.

For a moment Nicholas's energy seemed to make an impression on the unhappy girl. She looked up into his face inquiringly, almost timidly; but his mother's appeal neutralised the effect he had produced. With a

convulsive effort, Margot tore her hands from Nicholas's grasp—her eyes resumed their wildness, and she continued the solemn strain without heeding the interruption. As the hymn drew towards its close, her looks became wilder and wilder, her gestures more frantic; her voice, raised to an unnatural pitch, seemed to answer the wild blast as it came howling down the chimney, and sent the roof tiles clattering into the street.

There was something in this poor demented creature elf-like and awful. She seemed to be of another nature than theirs who surrounded her—removed from worldly cares and joys whilst yet lingering among men. It seemed almost permitted to suppose that her mental vision was expanded, and that her spirit could hold commune with beings and objects removed beyond the sphere of mortality.

The fire was burning low; the room getting dark and chill, Margot, with her cadenceless song, ardent gaze, and streaming hair, looked frightful in the gloom. Pernelle, at a sign of her mother-in-law, threw an additional log on the hearth; mechanically, Nicholas did the same, and unconsciously old Dame Flamel herself repeated the movement. The fagots soon crackled and flamed up, throwing upon Margot's countenance a ruddy glare; and now her features, distorted by suffering and haggard with the absence of reason, were fully revealed, they all wished back the friendly obscurity. The effect of the sudden blaze upon Margot was appalling. "Now they sing no more," she said, in a hushed whisper—"that form—that face! he is tied to the stake—the flames approach him—they have caught his garment. Mercy! how the fire glows and roars! This is a mightier pile they say than that of the grand master—fifty-two!" A loud shriek escaped her, more like the cry of an animal than a human creature. The storm answered it from without, shaking the house till everything rattled within it;—the flames leapt wildly up, fanned by the descending gusts.

"Did you hear a cry but now?" said Margot, in a hushed whisper, putting her finger to her ear; and motioning the others to be silent, she seemed to listen with intense anxiety.

"Margot," said Flamel, trying to divert her thoughts into a less harrowing channel, "it was such a night as this when you concealed yourself with my mother in this chimney, empty then. Do you remember the Templar—how he threatened? and the love-letter?"

"Addressed to the Princess of France. Ah, I remember it well," she said, with a wan and ghastly smile. "Where is she now, that poor princess? Pleasant loves those—love is always so sweet at first! Where are they, the three brothers D'Aulnoy, so gallant, so beloved, favourites of queens and princesses?" she shuddered. "They have left us all alone——"

"Do you remember the gay Carnival?" interrupted Nicholas; "and your cousin Roger and his hunting songs?"

"Oh, yes," she said, "why should I not?" And she attempted to catch up a favourite tune he used to sing; but again her thoughts wandered, and her tones fell back into the measure of the hymn. In vain did Pernelle, the old woman, and Nicholas now attempt to interrupt her; every effort of the kind only maddened her into fury. Suddenly the solemn cadence ceased.

"I know him now," she exclaimed; "his face is turned to me—he has recognised me! Fools! why hinder me from ascending the pile? Have I not good right?—the paramour of a Templar! Almeric, my Almeric, they cannot keep us asunder—I will join thee despite their efforts! Almeric, I hear thy voice—thy cry of agony—I would know it among a thousand—I come to thee!" And with a wild exclamation she threw herself forward on the burning logs.

In an instant her long, black hair played around her head like serpents of fire, and her robe was but one sheet of flame. The shrieks of old Dame Flamel and the howls of the tempest almost drowned Pernelle's agonising entreaties that her husband would withdraw Margot from her voluntary pile; and when, roused from his stupor, Nicholas removed her, it was Pernelle's ready hand that presented the blanket to suffocate the flames about her person. The same presence of mind enabled her to provide what was immediately necessary. But Margot had suffered beyond the chance of recovery. The whole of that night and the ensuing day was but a protraction of agony which might well expiate greater sins than those of which the poor girl had been guilty.

In her last moments Margot recovered her intellects sufficiently to recognise her friends and acknowledge their kindness; and to express gratitude for the great mercy vouchsafed her of being permitted to take her last rest in that home which she had so recklessly left.

She could, however, give no account of her adventures; indeed, her sufferings were so great that a course of interrogation would have been gratuitous cruelty. But it is probable that after her interview with the princesses, she had contrived, by some means or other, to obtain access to Almeric previous to the closing scene of his existence. For she spoke more than once, but ever in a disjointed way, of a certain house in the Jew quarter of the town, about which he seemed to have given her some instructions, but of what nature could not be gathered from her unconnected sentences.

XLVII.

With Margot's death, the last page of Dame Flamel's history closed. She had no more pleasure in the passing hour than hope in the future. With her son's inability to add to the comforts of her old days, her maternal tenderness seemed to diminish; and after grumbling at him and Pernelle the livelong day, she moped in the chimney-corner of an evening. Flamel continued to wait patiently the visits of his few employers in the midst of his own speculations, from which Margot's death did not rouse him, inasmuch as therein he found his only solace from affliction.

"Yes, yes," Dame Flamel would mutter to her patient daughter-in-law, "it's all very well for you, Pernelle, who spend the better portion of your life at the foot of altars, to frame excuses for your husband's state of mind, but I, who am not agile enough to run to church, and too stiff to kneel on the bare stone, am obliged to sit at home, and a precious life I have of it. However, it won't last long, that is one comfort!"

Pernelle bore up under these incessant complaints with exemplary fortitude and inexhaustible patience; but soon other trials were added to

these. Nicholas's resources were nearly exhausted. The chilling grasp of poverty tightened every day more and more upon them; and with all her excellent management, Pernelle could barely provide the strictest necessaries of life. The winter threatened to be very severe, and fuel and light were now luxuries in which they could not afford to indulge too freely. Meat became a rare sight at their frugal table, until it disappeared altogether, and was replaced with pulse, which, as Dame Flamel expressed it, had neither strength nor savour.

Nicholas, wrapped in his visions, was not aware of the change; but the old woman complained bitterly; and Pernelle often visited her happier sisters to extract from them some extra comfort for her mother-in-law, a proceeding which gratified Nicholas, whilst all personal attentions were utterly lost upon him.

Pernelle now became anxious to gather the trifling chat of the day to amuse the old woman in her solitude. She who never used to know or care how the great looked or dressed, now stood by to observe the train of some well-known noble, that she might have something wherewith to divert Dame Flamel's mind. Not that she earned, or was likely to earn, any thanks for such attention; but Pernelle was amply repaid by the consciousness of having soothed some few moments of her mother-in-law's monotonous existence.

Until latterly, Dame Flamel had been able to assist her in the discharge of her domestic duties; but her growing infirmities now rendered this task impracticable, and an amount of occupation fell to Pernelle's unassisted hands which might have appalled a less resolute spirit.

In the course of the winter the old woman grew worse. Even Nicholas was disturbed from his dreams by his impending bereavement. One single representation from Pernelle opened his eyes to the real state of the case.

"Your mother looks low," she said—"I am afraid, Nicholas, you are giving her pain at the very last."

Flamel understood his wife. His crucibles, phials, manuscripts, and retorts were laid aside. This sacrifice moved the old woman.

"You are my own good boy," she said, "and Heaven will reward you in its own due time."

From that moment her spirits rallied. Her son was much about her, not only bestowing his time, but his attentions and even his thoughts upon her, respectfully listening to her counsels, and promising future amendment. Once, and once only, did she raise a cloud on his brow.

"Ay," she said, in her own way, "it's impossible for us to foresee the future. Could I have foreseen that Pernelle would bring no more dower than Margot, that bright creature might have been living yet—living and smiling among us—and you a happier man, Nicholas."

"There you are mistaken, mother. Pernelle is an angel. I do not think Margot and I could ever have made each other happy."

"Perhaps you are right—Heaven guides all things for the best," said Dame Flamel, reading displeasure in her son's countenance. "Only, Nicholas, if you love your wife and don't wish to see her starve, you had better make gold as your father taught you, instead of seeking it where you will never find it. You are too solitary. If you and Pernelle went

out more, and made more friends and acquaintances, you would get more clients too."

"And yet, mother," responded Nicholas, "the few clients I can boast of are due to my peculiar mode of life."

Indeed, about the middle of winter, a man in a rider's cloak, with a hood drawn over his face, had entered Flamel's dwelling with every mark of caution which could denote a strong desire to escape observation. Ignorance in the rudiments of writing had evidently alone induced him to pay his reluctant visit. His business was the framing of a most mysterious missive, whose opening words, in the form of greeting, struck Flamel so forcibly as to imprint them on his memory. They were these: "The Phœnix will rise from its ashes!" The closing phrase, in the place of signature, was equally strange: "The sun rises in the East!"

The remuneration was satisfactory, the trouble slight, and the stranger apparently content with Flamel's performance and discretion, for he often returned to dictate epistles equally obscure, and as uniform in their beginning and close. To this solitary client succeeded a few more, as guarded in manner and as mysterious in style, whose missives invariably bore the same commencement and end. Flamel was not slow in guessing the real character of his employers; and he could not help being impressed with the fatality that ever connected him with a body of men which, of his own free choice, he would so gladly have avoided: but employment was now a question of bread for himself, his aged mother, and his beloved Pernelle, and he could not hesitate.

The tie that binds any association of men cannot be annihilated at one fell swoop. That, dispersed, broken as they were, that tie still endured among the Templars, Flamel now knew beyond a doubt; and to quarrel with their custom were to draw down upon himself the vengeance of these desperate men. This custom was not sufficient to bring comfort into the scrivener's dwelling, but so long as it warded off starvation he might consider himself fortunate in having that source of revenue still open to him.

He now became more laborious with his writing than he had been for some time past; and Pernelle could not but own, in the secret of her heart, that Dame Flamel was not altogether wrong in asserting that a little real industry on his part would have been more profitable to the domestic circle, if less agreeable to himself, than all his visionary labours. The gentle creature could not help lamenting that his peculiar frame of mind rendered practical exertion unpleasant to him; but had her dear Nicholas been more like other mortals, he would not be the man he was, and Pernelle felt for him that sincere love which makes even the defects of the beloved one acceptable as part of his individuality.

HOW SAMUEL APPLEYARD WENT TO SEE THE BOULOGNE REVIEW.

BY ALFRED SAXON, ESQUIRE.

I FIRMLY and fearlessly say, that I believe London was never in the memory of the very oldest inhabitant so dull or so empty as in the September of 1854. I believe more. I believe the fact will be mentioned hereafter as one worthy of commemoration in almanacks and annual registers! Every one had "flitted" away. Some to Switzerland and the Rhine; some to Killarney and our English Lakes; and some to Margate and Gravesend. Our army and navy were doing the good cause of the Osmanlis some service in the Baltic and Black Seas, at Sebastopol and Bomarsund. Physic, divinity, and law were all "out of town." No one was "at home." You were a Goth or Vandal to call on any one. The park was deserted; the opera was closed; the theatres shut up; Albert Smith off to find matter for a fresh route to Mont Blanc; and even the Vauxhall Gardens, in a huff at magisterial interference, had concluded their season. The streets were as silent and as empty as those of Herculaneum or Pompeii. The cabs were like the flies, in a state of torpor. The omnibuses were in deliberation on an open mutiny to "strike." All was silent save the cook-wenches (on board-wages, whose family was in the country), who had now the streets to themselves; the policemen, who were aroused to a state of uncalled-for zeal and attention, "moving on" every one; add of course the well known party of patriots in fez caps, who were at present "expatriated Moldavians"—I remember well, by-the-by, the same gentlemen as unfortunate Milanese last year—and you have the census of the London of this my era. The weather was lovely, the glass up to —— bless me! I forget where, if even I dared to say—the blue firmament of heaven cloudless, and the sea as smooth as a "duck-pond." All nature seemed in unison with locomotion.

In Bloomsbury-square North there lived the Appleyards. Mistress Barbara, mother—relict of the dear departed Jacob Appleyard, a broker, much respected in the City—and Master Samuel, son and heir, of no profession or trade whatsoever. The youth had tried the law, the confinement did not agree with his health; he then tried the flute, which was equally as injurious to his lungs—and thus time passed on awhile. He then wished to become a house agent and appraiser, but the weakness of his eyesight was an obstacle to this desire; and finally, a want of sufficient capital preventing his becoming partner in a house of business near Aldgate Pump, our hero remained an idle gentleman, living on his means, taking life as it came, and growing fat. When the tocsin of revolution sounded, when politicians and writers raised the alarm of an invasion, when prophets predicted the death of Louis Napoleon in the Strand, leading on his victorious phalanxes, after they had routed our army and pillaged the Bank of England—then, at that fell hour, Samuel Appleyard answered his country's cry, and, as though the eyes of Europe were on his own individual little person, he rushed to arms, threw himself into the ranks, and enrolled himself a cornet of the Brook-green Irregular Horse. This distinguished corps, to which I have also the honour to belong, is a

regiment of dismounted hussars, for we have not as yet purchased our chargers—this, for many reasons, all, however, totally irrelevant to the subject now before our notice, but which *may*, perhaps, prove worthy of a separate paper on another and more fitting occasion. We are dismounted, and will remain so for a period, although, in the name of myself and my brother officers, I am empowered to assure a noble, and enlightened, and British public that they *may* calm their fears at this statement, that the Brook-green Irregular Horse have *still* head-quarters at Hammersmith, and that when the French *do* next land at Deal in hostile array, the B. I. H. will be mounted, and to the fore, and then die or conquer! Before dismissing this, to me, very heart-stirring subject, allow me to mention, however, my good readers and kind friends, our dress, and then adieu to remarks on my brave comrades of the B. I. H. Our pants, good readers and kind friends, are scarlet, with two cords of gold up the seams; our hessians purple, heels yellow; our jackets blue; our pelisses slate-coloured; our busbies badger-hair, with orange jelly-bags; and our cords green. It is, certes, remarkable. Our friends call it singular, picturesque, and foreign; our enemies, loud, *outré*, and theatrical. The B. I. H. defy public opinion, snap their fingers at public taste, and damn public criticism; whilst our commandant, like a certain Lancashire colonel, is willing and able to beard the Leviathan of Printing House-square at his desk, if *he* ever dares to disparage our gallant corps. So let *all* beware! London, I have written already, was dull; Bloomsbury-square was, in verity, no exception to that statement. The statue in the gardens frowned darker than ever, the trees put on their sable livery of autumn, and the sparrows looked melancholy, and began to moult. (I believe caged parrots and London sparrows are the only birds mentioned in natural history that moult eight times a year.) The Appleyards found it equally as stupid as every one else did; besides, all their friends had left town, and would talk so—lawk! pass such ill-natured remarks—if they moped themselves up in their house all the time until Christmas. The Bowlers, of Red Lion-square, had gone to Herne Bay, and wrote of nothing but the delights of eating fresh shrimps and eel-pies; and the Jordans, of Montague-street, had gone down to see their old aunt in Devonshire, from whom they expected a legacy.

"We must *tower* somewhere, Samuel," observed Mrs. Appleyard, in oracular tones, to her son one evening.

"Little wits jump, mother," replied her son; "I was just going to make the same observation to you. We must *tower* somewhere. What say you to Boolong, eh? Prince Halbert and the rest of the Royal Family go there next week to visit Lewis Napoleon at his camp."

"I can't talk their lingo, Samuel—and no more can you, for the matter of that; and what, pray, are we to say for bed, board, tea, supper, and washing?"

"Donney-moy quelque chose ah manger," said the son, proud of his only sentence at all approachable to French.

"Will that do for everything? Does that mean bed, board, and washing at so much a day, servants included, eh, Samuel?"

"Oh, bless your old simplicity, mother, no—no," said Samuel. "Tubbs, however—Mr. Simon Tubbs, articled clerk to Swanquill, down in Olbern there—says as how all the parties in Boolong talk nothing

but English; and if it was not for the slanging-matches atween the old fish-women—poisoners, as he calls 'em—you'd fancy yourself in Billingsgate-market, and no mistake."

"We will go then, Samuel—day after to-morrow," said Mrs. Appleyard, with decision.

"Our trip, mother, will extend my military knowledge, if it don't my military acquaintance," observed the son. "Who knows? perhaps Halbert or Lewis may ask me to a quiet chop and a pint of sherry in a social way."

"You may be a hero yet, Samuel."

"Oh! I should like war, mother, if it wer'n't for our double income-tax, and that nasty powder, and those cruel leaden balls—eh? Oh, I should like to see a battle without swords, powder, or shot; shouldn't you?"

"You will take your regimentals——"

"*Uniform*, please, mother—regimental, adjective—uniform, substantive—I *shall* take my uniform; I have as honourable a right to wear it as the Life Guards or Blues—ain't I now? What service have those gents seen, except riding by our Queen from the Opera House to Buckingham Palace? Whilst the B. I. H. have seen service. They put down a bread riot at Kensington one Saturday night. They did their duty, ma'am, and they are ready to do it again."

"You are a good soldier, Samuel; a good soldier—that is, I mean as far as your moral character goes—which the *Times* thinks is the true standard of one. Poking people with bayonets, and smashing in skulls with gun's butts, is heavenly. But such horrid, wicked creatures as the 46th—oh, lawk!—and their fie fie friends? Why, truth is, Samuel! none of them soldiers have got characters, bless you, no more than an Irish maid of all work. Lawk! when we lived in Sloane-street we hadn't a maid but when she had gathered up a few shillings must needs be a love-making with some corporal in Knightsbridge Barracks. We got 'em ever so ugly, and pock-marked, and squint-eyed, lawk! it was all the same—*every* Sunday out. Then came warning; then they didn't care—they were to be officers' ladies. Heigho! and the upshot? Why, the poor creatures came back with broken hearts and light pockets, and no money, and their corporal-husbands that were to be real gentlemen had gone back to their duty and their *wives* at Windsor, and left our poor maids without a character, and without virtue, and, of course, without a situation; for your poor father could never endure a licentious female, Samuel;—no, never."

"We will go the day after to-morrow to Boolong, and I *will* take my uniform, mother."

I shall not describe the journey of Mrs. and Master Appleyard to France. Who has not been from the London Bridge Station to Folkestone? Who has not taken a trip over in the Boulogne steamer? The Channel on this occasion was "as calm as a duck-pond." No one was ill; and even the gentleman who always takes nasty decoctions that are more certain of producing than averting nausea, could not make himself sea-sick; and the lady of delicate nerves, who had observed to you in the railway train "she always feels squeamish, even on the Thames," looked as blooming, and as smiling, and as pleasant, as she ever could have done at a Chiswick

fête. So, after a deal of "Starboard," and "Port," and "Ease her," and "Stop her," our friends arrived safe at Boulogne, where they had for the first time the confusion of hearing the *patois* of the fish-dames, the irascibility of the Douaniers, and the screams of the hotels' touts—"L'Europe," "L'Angleterre," "Les Bains," "Meurice," &c.; all which, you know, mingles together into such an incomprehensible jargon that I defy even my best friend, or my cleverest reader, to define or translate correctly.

Previously to landing on the Gallic shores, when aboard of the steam-boat, the *Lord Warden*, with that unrestrained familiarity to which circumstances drive the proudest of us all, and aided and abetted by the agency of the gift of a cigar, Samuel, our hero, succeeded in making the acquaintance of Mr. Grindley, of Chepstowe-place, a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant of a division of the county of Kent; "Squire Grindley with the bull," as many of my southern agricultural friends may know him as; or "Waffy Grindley," as he is nicknamed by the members of the Conversative Club, in St. James's-street, to which he, as well as your most humble and obedient servant, both have the honour to belong.

"The Hôtel des Bains is the place," said Grindley, authoritatively, upon the knowledge of his having thirty-one years previously slept there in making *le grand tour* after leaving Christ Church, Oxford.

"The Hot-ell de Blains be it, sir," replied Samuel. "Come on, mother! I am precious hungry; ain't you?"

"Precious, Samuel. Oh! I wish we could get fresh shrimps and muffins just now, that is all."

"Allow me, madame, as having in my earlier days performed the great national farce of *le grand tour*, to give you my well-earned experience, and order a petit souper—garçong—garçong," said Grindley.

"Sommelier—pray excuse the correction, sir," observed an old count of the ancient *régime;* but as Grindley's knowledge of French, the language spoken, was as limited as a Yankee's, the correction passed unheeded.

"Garçong, soupey pour — pour — *three* — catter dishes; you compreney?"

"Yes, sarr—four plates. In von little half hour they vill be ready. Vary good, sarr."

I cannot here help alluding to the language of the Boulonnais; it is the most incomprehensible and ungrammatical you perhaps ever heard; from this singular fact, that every Frenchman tries to talk English, and every Englishman French; and this grafting of the Saxon on the Gallic may be all very well just now that the two nations are so allied, but it is very difficult to understand or speak, even for a proficient linguist. In short, a friend of mine learned Hindostanee and Turkish long before he could master the language of the good folk of Boulogne.

The petit souper came. Premier plat—three pieces of boot-soles, two inches in diameter, swimming in oil, called "biftek;" deuxième plat—potatoes maître d'hôtel; troisième plat—almonds and raisins; quatrième plat—sweet biscuits. A souper petit with a vengeance for three hungry people with Saxon appetites keen from sea-breezes; yet the party were on too high form, on too distant decorum, to raise a murmur, or urge a dissent, and so all three went to their chambers hungry, and I might write, supperless. Thence our friends into bed.

Albeit previously Mistress Appleyard did partake of a glass of cognac and water—stronger of the former, perhaps, than the latter—and Samuel, too, of his cigar and brandy. O you great Jupiter! what an age is this, and what a world, that persons cannot live without playing the fool of dissimulation! But the gods' wills be done, and let them all to their virtuous couches for a brief period, whilst a lapse of ten minutes ensues in my lecture, for the showman to quaff his sherry and soda-water behind the scenes.

Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle and up goes the curtain. It is a glorious morning, bright, calm, soft, and balmy—the 5th of September, 1854. That that old refugium peccatorum, that blessed spot where the panting, weary gambler finds his rest, well-known Boulogne-sur-Mer, is decked out in all the gorgeous pageantry of a French *fête*. The banners of the allies, France and England, side by side, flutter in the breeze, or wind around each other as the summer zephyr drops for a few seconds, calm emblems of union, liberty, and friendship. Myriads on myriads of people throng the busy quays, eager eyes, happy faces, and merry voices meet you at every turn. The soft tones of Normandy, Bretagne, and Poitou mingle with the more bass ones of Kent, Yorkshire, Leinster, and Perth. There are a few common words uttered by the throng, which actuate the breasts of all the noble, the honourable, and the fair—a common sentiment that makes the heart to beat and the blood to boil, and our feelings to be in THE GOOD CAUSE, and our lives and wealth ready to aid the weak and oppressed. They are short and few : "A bas le Moskovite !" "Down with the cruel Tsar !"—yet they speak volumes on volumes, and will last as long as history pens her everlasting truths. The *poissonnières* are tricked out in their gayest attire, in those picturesque hues that have so oft caught the limner's eye—the stalwart British Guardsmen—the gay and swaggering Cent Guards—the little soldier of the line—the hardy Saxon sailors—the English and the French—the manly beauty of the Briton and the piquant delicacy of the Artois dames—are here present together to give an enthusiastic reception to that auspicious event—the meeting of the two great potentates of the world, the representatives of the two greatest kingdoms in friendly unison.

There is a surge in the crowd, a thrusting forward, a swaying to the right and the left, an anxious straining of eyes towards the west, when, like an albatross so swift, dashing along merrily over the calm unruffled sea, leaving a white line frothing abaft her wake, and bearing the royal burgee flying from the peak, proudly sails the British yacht, bearing the Prince Consort and staff to the Gallic shores. The band of the Guides strikes up "Rule Britannia," and a thousand lusty hurrahs and a thousand gentle bravas echo and re-echo through the old rocks and narrow streets of Boulogne.

"Who is dat, sir?—dat, sir, bowing?" inquired an excited Frenchman.

"That, sir," replied Grindley, his feelings swelling up to his eyes—"that, sir, is HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS FIELD-MARSHAL PRINCE ALBERT."

"Maréchal of England? Vaterloo, Vellington's successor—eh, sar?"

"Well—no—no," replied Grindley.

"No, sir. Active service in the person of Lord Hardinge has a prior claim," said a stern voice; and looking round you beheld the speaker, a

short stiff man, with a grey moustache, a bronzed visage, and his left sleeve hooked to his right breast.

"Is dat another of your varriors?" continued the inquiring Frenchman; "von who has led your conquering hosts to death or glory on India's arid plains?"

"No, no, sir—not exactly," replied Grindley, puzzled to explain. "That, sir, is his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, Commandant of the Sherwood Rangers. You know, sir, the old Latin aphorism—'Parva sit foris arma nisi est consilium domum.' He is an example. Or as our great northern historian, Sir Archibald Alison remarks, that it was not the Norman nobility, not the feudal retainers, that gained the victories of Cressy and Poictiers, but the yeomen—the *yeomen*, sir."

"Bah!" observed the Frenchman; "son pantalon est bien fait."

"Popular belief has it, sir, they are the exact pattern of those worn by the illustrious founder of his grace's corps—bold Robin Hood. Popular belief, sir, is in error, for it is my impression that that noble freebooter, like many of his *confrères*, the modern footpads, were very limited in their wardrobes."

"Is that Monsieur Alexis Soyer—the cook, dressed up as another of your peace heroes?" asked the Frenchman with a sneer, pointing to another officer in uniform. "You are a wonderful people; you call yourselves a great military nation, yet on a great event like this your real officers come *en bourgeois*, and your cooks, and your dukes, and your carpet knights *en grande tenue*—ve cannot understand your contraries."

At six o'clock that evening our friends the Appleyards and Mr. Grindley sat down with some other twenty persons of both sexes to the good dinner of the table-d'hôte of the Hôtel des Bains. Had I space or time I could give you some amusing characteristics of many of those assembled; I shall, however, confine my remarks to three persons—Captain Scamperdues, late cornet in her Majesty's Light Dragoons, which he left after six months' service, from being unable to meet various bills and post-obits; he had "flown," a cadet of an old Norfolk family, with some good qualities and excellent parts, remarkable solely in his regiment for his talents of acting. His commission being sequestered to the Jews, and his father declining his acquaintance for this cause, Captain Scamperdues left with a second-rate actress from a minor theatre to try his fortune on the American "boards," with what success I cannot tell. I only know he returned to Boulogne—after his lady friend had eloped with a Yankee sugar merchant—a poor, destitute man, with nothing to live on save that ever doubtful capital, his wits. Opposite to him sat Mr. Terence O'Loughlin, an Irish patriot, if you know what that means, for I am sure I don't. He used to walk on the pier daily, and, standing thereon, with one hand in the chest of his buttoned-up coat, and the other waving towards the white cliffs of Dover, he spoke such rhapsodical nonsense as the following, which led many to believe he was partially insane; others, that he was Smith O'Brien escaped, or Lord Edward Fitzgerald redevivus; whilst the Spanish lady, who spends her life in serenading the wild wild waves for a few sous, considered our Irish friend, "the patriot," a hybrid between William Tell and Lord Byron. Well, I will give you a style of his soliloquy:

"Forgive Ingland? never! *Nev—er*, oi say, sirr. Be me oath, sirr,

oi would die on this iligant pier first! Ingland has trampled on moi counthry! Ingland has bound Irin's sons in chains! Ingland has ravished the darlint daughters of me Imirald Isle! *Where is* our parliament, sirr? In London. Where is our aristocrats and our nobility? Fugitives, sirr; vagabonds, sirr; seeking in foreign lands the protection and deloights denied them in the great domains of our birth! May me curse—nay, Cromwell's curse—taint ye, yer dirty ould Ingland! Who fears to spake of nointy-oight? Not oi, faith! May the Imperor of France land in Bantry Bay, and Terence O'Loughlin himself will take off his hat and say, 'All hail, mightie Imperor!' And then oi meself will have me rights; me castle back, where me ancestors dwelt, and oi kept the hounds meself, and gave as moch whisky-ponch to me friends as ony o' ye could cellar beneath yer waistcoats; and ye, ye little damsal, shall be me Kathleen Mavourneen (turning to the Spanish lady), and play i' me castle's hall 'The Harp that once in Tara's Halls;'" &c., &c., and so on for an hour.

I found out afterwards Terence had been expatriated for debt, arising through the most reckless extravagance I think I ever heard of, and by his exit abroad from Ireland bringing several honest tradesmen to bankruptcy, and throwing some poor families into abject ruin who had lent him their little "alls."

The third personage at the table-d'hôte was Miss Amelia Cabbage, a juvenile lady of a certain age. She always spoke confidentially to you, never above a whisper, ducking her head towards her left breast, and crossing her arms over her lap.

"Yes, sir, I had it from a gentleman about court"—[He was a beef-eater, my good friend]—"the Princess Royal is going to marry the King of Portugal. Good match, sir—excellent. Papa has left the young couple together, and mamma will manœuvre it all, you see, during his absence, sir—a good match—excellent. Yes, sir. Then I had this from the highest foreign authority"—[Between ourselves, reader, it was Fleury, the courier]—"that the Empress Eugénie *cannot* go to the court of St. James's. It is not etiquette, sir. In opposition, sir, to our strict customs. But our dear, good little Queen is very fond of the Empress; so she is invited over with her husband to Osborne, where they will meet, sir, in a domestic, friendly way," &c., &c. And so on, retailing bits of court news as improbable as the foregoing.

The fourth personage was John Brown, Esquire, a well-to-do grazier in the county of Lincoln. He was the personification of a *milord Anglais*, the stout elderly gentleman, with a scarlet umbrella, I saw represented at one of the theatres in Paris, I forget which. I thought it great nonsense then, but having found out the type since, I am convinced of its truth. He edifies the company at dinner thus:

"Yes, sirs, I say it! Yes, sirs, I say it!"—[He always begins so, with affirmatives and assertions that are incontrovertible]—"Yes, sirs, England'll never be England until Lord Aberdeen is sent bunged up in a sherry-cask down the Ohio. He is good for nothing. No; this war is a cowardly, beggarly piece of business. It has only kept up corn and stock, that's all the good it's done. Dundas ain't worth twopence, and Charlie's a humbug. Would Pitt have stood all this, eh? Wouldn't Nelson and Wellington have taken Petersburg, and Moscow,

and Sebastopol, months ago. Yes, I say it! Yes, I say more; this is a cowardly, beggarly affair, and Aberdeen is about as fit to be premier as Giles Whopstraw, my farming man! Why, if I quarrel with neighbour Smith, I should watch and catch him in the pasture-close, and have it out with him. I'd not sit on his muck-heap until I was sick, and the ammonia made me ill, and then fight him, but I'd off with my coat and neckerchief and in at him, fair up-and-down at once. No shilly-shallying. I knows a deal about this war. Corporal Jones, who was one of the marines who was in our ship that brought Nicholas over to England in '44, comes from my village; he knows everything. He says the Russians can't fight with fists, or they ain't allowed. How can they with guns and swords then? *Bell's Life* ain't known no more among them than the Talmud is. If they get angry they bite out one another's beards; that's what they do. Pass the bottle, please, Mr. Frogy; don't you act cork and stop it. Ah! ah! ah! Well, I say, you attack Sebastopol very well; you put a lot of poor fellows here, this spot stands for an island; well, Neptune's daughters get cross, a storm blows, and away drives the ships. If those poor fellows get beat, who takes them off that island—eh? No, bless you, Lord Aberdeen ought to be made guano of; he ain't fit for his place. Why, bless you, Nicholas never meant to take England or France either; he only wanted a marine residence for his poor, delicate wife—she is a sad, sickly body—just as my Lord Louis here has purchased the Hôtel de Brighton for sixteen thousand pounds for Eugenia.* It is an unjust war, this with Russia: tallow and oil is riz, certainly, but it is unjust. Yes, I say so; it's all brought on by a private quarrel of our ambassador at Constantinople and Nicholas. Believe me—Nicholas ain't so bad as he's painted. He's a father of a family—three sons and three daughters; I'd marry one of the daughters, without ever seeing her, that I would, just out of pity, because the papers run down her papa so."

How long John Brown would have continued his sermon I cannot form any idea, had not the waiter rushed into the *salle-à-manger* and announced that the fireworks had begun; and thereon all the company left their seats and adjourned into the streets. The pyrotechnic display was beautiful, the *mise en scène* unequalled, the name of Charles Dickens—a name known and admired wherever English is spoken or read—equalled, if not surpassed, in the size of its letters, the imperial ones of Napoleon III., Emperor of France.

The streets were thronged, the *entente cordiale* complete. "Long may it last!" breathes every true-born Englishman.

"*Bon jour*—you do us moch honour," said a Cent Guard, cordially shaking our Life-Guardsman by the hand. "Bomarsund—Sebastopol—hein?"

"Bong jower to you, old flick," replied the Guardsman. "We all—FRATERNITY—now. Come, my little tulip, I must shake you by the hand, too," taking hold of a five feet nothing Chasseur de Vincennes.

"Oui certainement, *oui!* Sacré mille tonnerres!" exclaimed the little light-bob, standing on tip-toe to receive the crunch of the good-natured giant's shake of the hand. "Oui—mais Vaterloo—*Vaterloo*. Fraternité, oui—Ci—Ci—Ci—sacrrrre—e."

* This was a popular fallacy at the time, but it is not the truth. A *canard*.

"Well, comrade," said the heavy dragoon, turning back towards the Cents,—"quell now?"

The French soldier drew out a programme for the evening's amusement in five minutes, ending by a visit to the dance at the *fête aux fleurs*.

"Sorry, gents, I can't express what I want; sorry I don't jabber your lingo, my ed*h*ication's been neglected on that point. Ain't much of a dancer neither. This party, however," said the British dragoon, pointing to a short man, with very long hair, who looked like an acrobat in his Sunday clothes, "will express all my sentiments. Parley voos, Jones; je veuney after stables et havey big drink with mus-siers."

Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, and the green curtain drops on the second evening of our friends the Appleyards' trip to Boulogne. So let us to our virtuous couches, and a good night to all this side of St. Peter's. On the morrow up by cock-crow to see the camp—all the world and his wife at Boulogne—princes, counts, dukes, and lords; English, Belgian, Prussians, and Yankees; tailors from Conduit-street; bootmakers from Regent-street; lords from Belgravia, and ladies from Grosvenor-square; single and married, merry and melancholy; every one, in short, down even to our street alleys, Punch's show, the acrobats, and the Anglo-Ethiopian serenaders, chanting Nelly Bly. The masculine mind in a feminine body, rejoicing in single blessedness, Miss Periwinkle, was of course there. I first met her driving the mail in Connaught; next I saw her throwing a fly in Lock Ness; she then went up in a balloon as far as I saw; and I next heard of her going down in a diving-bell; she takes her morning "constitutional" up the Monument daily whenever she is in London, to keep her in good health and wind for her summer tours; she has been to Canton twice, where she refused a matrimonial offer from the half-brother of the Sun; she knows Sandilli intimately, he having presented her with sixteen scalps, and a needle-case made from the big toe of a British officer killed in the Caffre wars; she knows the Chactaws, and the Chippewas, and the Maudans, and the Kentuckians, and the Virginians, and all the rest of those go-ahead lot; she knows the Emperor of Russia very well, and dislikes him very much, and the Emperor of Prussia also; she considers him a fool, a person of no stability of character, and of no sound opinion on any point except on a sound bottle of champagne, which she considers is a virtue rather more adapted to wine-merchants and City councillors than to emperors and kings. She had just returned, when I met her this time at Boulogne, from Moldavia, where she had applied for a command in the bashi-bazouks, but a quarrel, which ended in a duel with Kara Fatma, the celebrated Maid of Marash, had caused Miss Periwinkle to retire hastily back into the western kingdom of Europe, and hence her presence on this auspicious event. Then of course there are those good-humoured sunburnt features so unmistakably English, of Jack Barnard, with a wide-awake hat on, and his Dollond swung across his body, cased in a suit of tweed. Jack is to be met everywhere, at the Vatican of Rome, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Lakes of Switzerland, or the Alps of Italy. You and I surely met him as we dashed across the Campagna and the Pontine Marshes—where we "funked" the malaria so—just to get to Rome to "do" a piece of British gallantry, and

stand on the "what's its name" of the Cupola of Rome! Good-natured cosmopolite as he is, which of us, pray, knows not Jack Barnard?—his rich, racy stories, his full sweet voice, his tales of kings and nabobs, his scandal of princesses and countesses, his troubadour airs or his comic fantasias, his *on dits* of Lord This or Tom That? In winter, at home, he keeps the table in a roar, when the dinner is good, the Sillery iced, and the guests masculine; and time passes so swiftly, you would fain murder the butler who brings round the coffee, and puts a period to the capital story or the jolly song. You cannot help strolling homewards with Jack afterwards when you have wished your host farewell. So you lounge down Regent-street, and Jack lights his pipe, and gives you one of his Geneva cigars, which he swears beats Hudson's or Fribourg's by long chalks; and he begins a fresh series of good sayings and doings, and lures you into the private room of the Harmonious Cellar, where you meet all Jack's best friends—actors, authors, wits, and *omne hoc genus*——But stop, we must not bore the *haut ton* with an author's reminiscences. Come, it is time we were all off to the camp, or *hut*, as it literally ought to be called, for we have a deal to see to-day. The bivouac is some two miles from Boulogne, up a steep ascent, and situated on a high, sandy, and healthy plain; it is the apex of a triangle, having another camp towards Calais, and another twenty miles in an opposite direction, each one containing twenty thousand men. France is a military nation with a vengeance. She had at that very time an army in Turkey, one in the Baltic, one at Rome, and the provinces were as well garrisoned as though all her forces were concentrated in them. The camp near Boulogne extends for six miles, and consists of small huts, resembling very much in appearance the Irish cabins of Galway. The woodwork of them is made in the workshops of Paris, and brought up to their respective sites, when the soldiers fill in the walls with mud and other matters, and then whitewash them over. After this they are thatched with straw. Inside the huts is a wattled hurdle raised for a trestle-bed, with plenty of dry straw. Each hut contains twelve men, a third of which are always on duty. I understand they are a decided failure on the old canvas tents. They require some days to erect, which would condemn them at once for "active service," besides being unhealthy. After much rain the damp strikes through, and pours down the walls like streamlets, which naturally produces dysentery and rheumatism amongst the soldiers. Campaigners will remember that the old canvas tent, when raised after the shower, was speedily dried by the wind blowing through them, or the powerful rays of the mid-day sun falling on their sides.

"This camp ought *not* to be allowed," said Squire Grindley, authoritatively. "There, gentlemen, *there* are the white cliffs of England. This camp, gentlemen, ought to be put down like street-bands and hurdy-gurdies in Oxford-street. Two hours' sail, and what would Great Britain be, gentlemen? A province. I favoured the *Times* with my views in an elaborate article, revised and corrected by my rector; the *Times* took no more notice of my remarks, sir, than if they had come from Jack Bluestalk, my ploughman. I wrote to the editor to inquire his reasons for such a slight; I received no answer, gentlemen. Knowing the *Times* to be commercial, I surmised they might fancy I wrote expecting remuneration. I sent a third letter to say I did not require payment for my

articles—no answer. And, 'gad, gentlemen, would you believe it, I have never received one to this day? The *Times*, sirs, is going to the devil! So I wrote to my newspaper agent to change it for the *Morning Post*. Shan't have MY patronage, hang me if it shall, and I only hope Louis Napoleon will sack the Printing-house-square offices first thing he does, when he *does land* in London!"

Well, we cannot linger longer listening to Squire Grindley's twaddle, for we have the Queen's yacht and a hundred other things besides to see, and the table-d'hôte is punctually at six o'clock, and dinners abroad wait for no man.

After a deal of pushing, and swearing, and sacréing, with a fearful *esprit de corps* pervading the atmosphere, with a strong infusion of garlic and onions, you reach the gangway, and are shown over the royal vessel by a fine brawny son of Neptune, who endeavours to explain each part of the ship, but is perfectly prevented by running obligatos likened unto these:

"Thank you, Mr. Seaman. How kind of you!" said Mrs. Appleyard. "Pray, sir, how many souls live aboard here?"

"One hundred and eighty, marm."

"Will Lewis Napoleon go with you to Fooston?" (Folkestone) said the falsetto of a Cockney tailor.

"No, sir—leastways not as I heard on; besides, we are bound for Cowes, not Fooston."

"Thank you, Mr. Seaman!" continued Mrs. Appleyard. "How wrong for these people to crush so, and I see they are nearly all English who are so rude; I nearly lost the sleeve off my gown. I know what I'd do—I'd charge sixpence a head entrance, and give the money to the wives of the soldiers in the East—and the English double—a shilling a head I'd charge them; or I would charge the French nothing, for they ought to see it, and I would charge the English half-a-crown a head. You see the French are so stingy they wouldn't come if they'd to pay anything, and the English are so rude and obtrusive except they have to pay. The English gets quite genteel the moment they pull out their shillings. Well, well! look, Mr. Sailor, how the crowd is pushing. I always go with the tide, sir, I do, and when I am in France I behave genteel as the French. Do at Rome as Rome does, or, as we now say, when you are in Turkey you must do as the Turkeys do. And why can't my fellow-country people—eh, Mr. Seaman?"

"This is the Queen's sleeping apartment," observed the sailor.

"And is that red-clothed gentleman one of the Life Guards, the party who cuts a leg of mutton through with one cut of his sword?" said an old lady in a poke bonnet.

"Bless your heart! no, marm. Them bees our marines—jollies, we calls 'em. We have fourteen aboard, marm, and a colour-sergeant."

"Oh! thank you, Mr. Seaman. How stupid I am!"

Thursday, the 7th.—Up literally by cock-crow, as Chanticleer proclaimed the morn. Each and every one who wished to see the review tumbled out of his bed and began the matutinal duties of the toilet. The Emperor, Prince Albert, and staff were to be on the ground where the grand battle was to be fought at eight o'clock; and the little town

of Marquise, being half-way between Boulogne and Calais, is about twelve English miles from the former. The Appleyards were first down in the *salle-à-manger*, and finished their first cup of coffee ere Squire Grindley put in his appearance, who arrived in the room very hot and apoplectic-looking, from the tightness of his stock and sash. Their order of going was thus wise: Mrs. Appleyard in a one-horse chaise, hired for the day for the sum of five guineas; Samuel on that elderly flea-bitten grey hack—I believe as familiar to the good folk of Boulogne as the Napoleon Column—and Grindley on his own cob. The time arrived for the mount. Samuel, in the full-dress uniform of the Brook-green Irregular Horse, wore on his nose a pair of spectacles to aid his eyesight. Placing one foot in the stirrup, he was about to throw his right leg over the saddle, when such an explosion re-echoed from the exertion, that our poor hero found, like Humphrey Clinker, he had rent his trousers in twain, and, without a breach of good morals, could not proceed on his journey. Oh! Aaron and Sons! for what a deal have ye to answer! Now most of our officers in that crack and distinguished corps, the B. I. H., employ the leading tailors of the West End. Myself, Stultz; Captain Figsby, Poole; little Wigglong, Browne, of Hanover-street, &c. Samuel, however, lured by the specious advertisements of the newspapers and those little books thrown in at your cab window as you drive along the streets of London, in a fit of very false economy had gone to the celebrated mart of the highly poetical A. Aaron and Sons, in the Minories, and hence was the cause of the sad *contre-temps* to which I have been compelled to allude. To sew them up carefully, placing a black patch of calico there, was the handiwork of the ever-willing French chambermaid; and by mounting from a high step, and paying particular attention to his position astride his "gallant grey," our hero covered his shame and dishonour in the modern "Field of Gold Cloth." Grindley had on a spink-span new deputy-lieutenant's uniform, with a fine cocked-hat and a large nodding feather, and a telescope swung across his left shoulder. He rode a short, punchy, rat-tailed cob, with peculiarly rough action, that the aforesaid Grindley bore, as a martyr at the stakes bears the lambient flames, recompensed as our country squire was by an idea that all the world assembled held the same monstrous fancies as himself in regard to his being the personification of a Murat or a Beresford!—flattered also by the title the milliners and baby-jumpers of Boulogne dubbed all these gallant deputy-lieutenants—namely, "Les Majors d'Etat d'Angleterre!"

We are all now assembled by the windmill, two miles from the town of Marquise, where the sham fight begins. The Emperor commands in person 10,000 men, and is opposed to General Shcramm, who commands a similar number. Historians and officers tell us it is utterly impossible to describe a real battle, and in my idea it is equally so with a sham one. I consider the gentlemen of the London press deserve great credit for their graphic accounts, which we have all read, of course, and therefore require no vain repetitions, were I even able to give them of this petite guerre. However, let us have a little gossip about the French army, whilst generals are commanding, aides-de-camp galloping, officers vociferating, cannons booming, and Chasseurs running.

The *élite* of the cavalry are the Cent Guards—a hundred picked men

from the rest of the "Horse." Their dress, to my taste, is too theatrical. I will tell you what it is. It is a slate-coloured tunic, with red and gold aiguillette, scarlet overalls, and a cocked-hat, dismounted. Mounted, they wear the same tunic, leathers, and jack-boots, and a gilt helmet with a feather. They do not clean their own troopers, but have grooms, who remind one strongly of the railway porters we meet on the South-Eastern or Great Northern lines.

The Cents are well mounted, the Emperor giving from eighty to a hundred guineas for troopers, which he desires may in all cases be black, but they are in reality—*all brown!* This regiment is, as perhaps I need not tell you, the envy of the rest of the army; no belle at her first season arouses more jealousies amongst her dear female friends, than do these gallant fellows amongst the rest of their comrades in arms. A few days after the review of which I have just made mention, for some silly breach of military etiquette a Chasseur sous-officier called out one of these Cents, and mortally wounded him in the duel.

After the Cents, next in consequence come the Guides—a fine body of men, habited something like our Hussars, without the pelisse. Their troopers are picked from the rest of the cavalry, and are a good stamp of horse. This corps answers to our household Guards, and are the only regiment in France that keeps up an officer's mess on the English principle, as the rest of the French officers dine at cafés, according to their respective rank. Having said this much, we can with pride draw a comparison between our own cavalry and that of our good friends—the French. Their "Plungers" are infamously mounted on weak, spavined, leggy, no-loined brutes, more like Ramsgate bathing-machine horses than anything else our English notions can conceive. Their Lights and Lancers are much better mounted than their Heavies, comparatively, of course; but then their horses are very small, none exceeding fifteen hands in height. The cavalry soldier wears his cloak rolled across his body, which must be a great impediment in his offence and defence with the sword, and their carbines, swung behind their backs, are great unwieldy weapons, more resembling children's pop-guns on a large scale than aught else I ever could remember to have seen. Their artillery are what would have been styled by Peninsular campaigners "Rough-and-ready boys." The gun-carriages are much heavier than our own, without any additional advantages for such an encumbrance of weight. The extra wheel carried on the gun is palpably bad, even to the eye of a civilian, whilst the harness, or gearing, is a great deal too complicated, and not sufficiently concise. In their movements they are slow compared to our own artillery, which would "work round" them—to use a gunner's expression—yet, as I have said above, they are "rough-and-ready" lads, and I have no doubt, on service, are almost equal to her Majesty's; I must, however, award the palm of superiority to "British guns," the horses certainly bearing no comparison to our own. The infantry is very good, although they work independently. I saw a captain bring up his company of the Chasseurs de Vincennes, and throw them into a plantation to skirmish, as my Lord Bellerophon would his beaters in the battues near Joxburgh Castle. The infantry generally work three deep; but on this occasion they were told off into two ranks, the Emperor being desirous of introducing the English system of double rank

into his "foot regiments" of the line. For hard plodding work I should fancy the infantry of France superior to our own: I saw them hard at work, over a very hilly country, from seven A.M. until noon, and they appeared as fresh at the end of "la petite guerre" as at the commencement. They are stout, stiff men, much shorter than the British—five feet four being about the average height—but of a very active build, and broad-chested. Their dress is decidedly superior to other armies, although not so to the eye; whilst the stuff stock for the leathern one is a boon I hope to see so shortly in our ranks as to require no further comment here. The battle of Marquise was drawn, of course—you surely did not expect otherwise? The Emperor has sounded a truce, and raising his cocked-hat, congratulates General Schramm on his strategy. Prince Albert echoes a similar opinion, and after a little bandying of compliments, the imperial party retire back on a tent pitched in a field hard by, where, over a Champagne *déjeûner à la fourchette*, *entente* sentiments were exchanged, and I have no doubt "our absent wives" were toasted with that reciprocity of feeling the circumstances of this royal meeting must have produced. The soldiers marched *au repos*, and the spectators generally, and the Appleyards in particular, bivouacked in little knots, and feasted on *pâtés* and boars' heads, and quaffed Champagne and Badminton. Jolly dogs we all were, and merry jokes we all cracked, whilst Grindley skirmished about the country, taking violent exercise, making himself very hot, with no apparent reason, except to try his new uniform, as some ingenious youths test the goodness of their yachts, ere leaving harbour, by wearing the rigging. In half an hour we all form into a contiguous column of carriages, and equestrians, and pedestrians, and return homewards rejoicing, albeit drenched with the white sticky dust of the great north road.

That summer's eve was bright—the hour eleven, P.M.—the hemisphere a deep bright purple, studded with a thousand glittering stars that no art could near approach in setting or brilliancy, the air soft and balmy, the water idly splashing the granite walls as the tide slowly ebbed and flowed, and reflecting in its crystal surface the dark dancing shadows of the assembled multitudes as some strange phantasmagoria. The atmosphere breathes of voluptuous enjoyment, an inward sense of ecstatic delight unappreciated by the cold northerners of Great Britain. The beautifully-arrayed lamps so tastefully devised—the far-off sounds of sweet music—the soft reed band of the Guides as it came floating over the calm ocean's estuary, make us all drink in the soothing influence of the beauteous scene! There is a lull. We gaze on yon shooting star as it glides along its rapid course, or turn again on the picturesque hues of the *poissonnières*, or anon listen as we catch the melodious refrain of some Artois chanson trolled by the sailor as he punts along his boat in the calm still waters of the harbour. The calm becomes a storm. A thousand vivats, and a thousand good hearty British hurrahs are heard: "Bomarsund!"—"Sebastopol!"—"Never think of Vaterloo!" "Bygones be bygones"—are the sentiments of the crowd. "England and France allied"—"God save the Queen!"—"Et partant pour la Syrie"—"Rule Britannia," "Garry Owen," and the "Marseillaise," those three tunes jumbled into a fantasia to show the unity of nations. And the tramp of soldiery, the gay notes of the Guides' band, and the servitors bearing flambeaux breathing forth

the glaring red and blue lights, and showing the way, make of it all a scene, we have little hesitation in averring, we shall never see the like of again.

"Adieu, le Prince de l'Angleterre!" "Hurrah for Halbert!" were jumbled together in such heterogeneous tones that could only have equalled the first remark after the curse of Babel—"Vive l'Empereur!" "The man of the priests and the army!"—"Vivat! Vivat!"—"Hurrah! Hurrah!" And thus amidst blue lights and rockets the little yacht steams her course away, and the Prince Consort of England left the friendly and hospitable shores of France to return to his queen and family.

Our tale is done: yet food remains for serious and startling consideration. The two greatest nations of the world, so long rivals, have now met in friendly union to defy the encroachments of a tyrannical despot and his semi-barbarous hordes. The power of Russia has been unmasked; its thorough supineness and ostentatious vanity exposed; the subtlety and vacillation of Prussia has been brought to light; the ignorance and superstition of Turkey has transpired to disillusionise our ideas upon the character of the Osmanlis, and show their bigoted hatred of the Christian Giaour forces. This much has been exposed at the modern "Field of the Cloth of Gold"—this much has been done since this our country was raised from its lethargy by the massacre of Sinope and its inevitable consequences—the first "trump of war." Much, however, remains to be done. Sebastopol may have fallen, but the Tsar is not at St. Helena. Turkey is our ally, but the Mahommedan dark tenets are the religion of Abdul-Medjid and his people. The Emperor of France is firm on his throne, but he is only the man of the priests and the army, and a powerful internal party still exists of Legitimists who hold as hateful views against Citizen Napoleon Bonaparte as they do against *perfide* Albion; and, lastly, a large army—for the conscription has descended to lads of twenty summers—is tented on the Gallic plains, imbued with the taste of blood and war—infected from the victorious legions of the East—which bids Englishmen beware, and admonishes Great Britain of the old aphorism—"Fore-warned is fore-armed."

Yet, as long as we have such "bull-dog courage" inherent in our natures—so long as we have such soldiers as the Household Brigade, the 33rd, and the 95th, gloriously conspicuous for valour on the heights of Alma—our little sea-girt island is secure. Let us not, therefore, lapse into our previous lethargy; let us be vigilant and watchful; let us treat the morbid sneers of the press against our army with the contempt and disgust they deserve, and the croakings and treason of Chartists and democrats as idle and growling garbage; and in conclusion, my good readers, let us one and all unite in prayer to Almighty God, who alone disposes the battle to His creatures, who giveth courage in the hour of trial and death, who granteth victory and escape to the good and brave, and who alone judgeth the frailties of the young and thoughtless, to bless our arms now engaged in mortal strife in the East, to be merciful to the wicked, and save and defend all such as put their trust in Him, nor in the sad hour of tribulation forget "the fatherless and the widow."

Thus endeth the true and veritable history of Simon Appleyard's visit to the review of Boulogne, with a few concluding serious thoughts made and done by one Alfred Saxon, of London, in the county of Middlesex, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and fifty-four; and so, Amen!

ONE OF MANY.

BY MARY C. F. MONCK.

She led a solitary life
  In the crowded city street,
Where the air was heavy with human breath,
  And the tramp of busy feet,
Hurrying ever to and fro,
Echoed and clanged on the flags below.

Hers was no slight and graceful form,
  No sweet, fresh, youthful face;
Nor yet the pale, pure brow where grief
  Had left a holier grace.
No! meagre and bent, and half awry,
The children laughed as they passed her by.

Grey locks were parted carelessly
  On a dark and wrinkled brow,
Her eyes, perchance once soft and bright,
  Were hollow and rayless now;
And vanity's hand had never placed
The sable folds that girt her waist.

She looked on laughing youths and girls
  With a frown and a struggling sigh,
And she turned from young and loving pairs
  With a hard, averted eye.
What, marvel!—could one as lorn as she
Have with their joy a sympathy?

Through the summer-day she sat alone,
  Or, lured by the warmth and light,
She crept forth into the noisy street,
  When the sun was high and bright,
But shrunk, to be pressed and urged along
By the ebb and flow of the restless throng.

And when winter came with its frost and snow,
  And its cold, unpitying rain,
And its harsh winds driving the sheeted mist
  Against her window-pane,
Alone, from dawn till the night returned,
She sat by the hearth where her dim fire burned.

Alone—yes, ever alone, save when
  From the shadows of bygone times
Those, who were dust and ashes now
  In the soil of distant climes,
Came and moved before her sight,
In the darkness and hush of the silent night.

They say there are few in this lovely world
So desolate and lone
But have one solitary heart
Which they can call their own—
Some precious being beneath the sun
To love, and be loved by—but she had none.

'Twas many a long and weary year
Since she heard the linnet sing,
Or saw the lark from the meadow rise,
With the dewdrops on his wing;
Or watched the streamlet's mimic flood,
Or heard the breeze in the summer wood.

Many a year—yet there *was* a time
When the birds were not more free,
Nor poured their sweet and gladsome lays
More joyously than she;
But that time is gone, and her feet no more
Can tread the paths which she loved of yore.

'Tis all the same, she hath no choice
Where her lonely life shall end;
No change of place to her friendless path
One ray of light can lend;
The roll of the waves, or the rustling bough,
Or the hum of the city, are equal now.

One summer's morn, when even there
In that hot and smoky street
The south wind came with a balmy sigh
From field-flowers faint and sweet—
Kneeling beside her humble bed,
They found the lady—cold and dead.

None, as the coffin-lid was closed,
A sigh to her memory gave;
No tear from the hired mourners fell
As they laid her in the grave.
And the waves of life flowed on as though
That shattered bark had not sunk below.

They found when they rifled her scanty hoards,
In a casket dark with years,
A letter whose burning words of love
Were blistered with many tears;
A ring, and a curl from a manly head,
And written without, was the one word "Dead."

They cast them away as worthless things,
But oh! who now can say
What tales of passion and suffering
With these treasured relics lay.
For the story is one of years gone past,
And the tears of the mourner are dried at last.

XVII.

It may be remembered, that after overhearing from the myrmidons of Fitzosborn of the intended capture of Ediva, Ives, before undertaking the perilous task of misleading the personages sent for that lawless purpose, had directed Wilstan by what portal he and the lady were to depart; and now his forethought proved of much avail, for what with the period occupied in seeking means for flight, and the delay occurring at the convent, hardly had they issued from one door, than, from behind the house, at another, was heard the loud clanging of the bell which announced the arrival of the captors. Wilstan's heart beat wildly within him at the sound, and, anxious and excited, fain would he have dashed forward at once, and had even taken hold of Ediva's bridle for the purpose, when the cooler suggestion of old Guttorm stayed him. "The noise would betray us to these vermin," said he, "and bring on a close chase. No; take an old man's advice, young sir, and never let the nearness of a danger cause you to forget prudence where a hasty action would surely bring on ruin; but it is, I know, against the creed of youth to bide a time, and many a fair life is lost from not having learnt that lesson. Be guided in this matter."

"What, then, would you do?" inquired Wilstan, turning impatiently upon him.

"Move quietly towards the wood on the right," replied Guttorm, "where the low brushwood will screen us from sight; then, having gone the length of its range, we shall have at least a fair start if we are put to our speed."

"Not so," rejoined Wilstan; "the villains are already within the walls, and soon will they find the prize they seek for already fled. The place will be surrounded, and we shall be lost."

"Yet, surely, my preserver," interposed Ediva, "age hath here its experience. Trust the good old man that in this he hath judgment."

Wilstan bowed his head to the opinion of his fair companion, assenting with as good a grace as might be expected from a young man who finds his own judgment received with less favour than others. Hardly had they reached the covert of the wood, than the sentinels ordered by Gilbert—as in the last chapter—appeared, and had a full view of the pathway just vacated by the fugitives. Safe, however, within the screen thus amply provided, the latter, with leisurely caution, progressed, and as every step removed them further from their pursuers, Wilstan forgot his slight mortification, and his heart grew proud and elate. But a few hours ago, and the warm outpourings of his love had been repulsed by one now dependent on his skill and courage to be removed from a great harm. He already felt that he was no longer the altogether undeserving lover he had been before; now, at least, there was some claim upon her gratitude, and his pretensions, however hopeless, were sheltered from contempt.

To relieve their horses, Wilstan and his companions now dismounted, and after a few words with Guttorm as to their route, the youth led

Ediva's steed, while Sweene, with no less gallantry, did the same to that of Githa.

"Art thou not afeard, my pretty Githa," said her lover, "lest these Norman ogres overtake and swallow thee up?"

"Nay," replied the damsel, "I hold they may be gentle folk, and will harm me not. If otherwise, at the worst, I must make trial to turn their stony hearts into good flesh and blood, and so escape their fury."

"Let no such trial be made when I am by," rejoined the young giant, "nor let me see the fool who dare cast sheep's-eyes upon thee, an he would keep clear of the swing of my good sword."

"If thou wouldst not have me be taken, why lag we so far behind the others?" rejoined Githa, looking towards the rest of the party, who had got considerably in advance. "See, they have already reached the bound-mark of the wood, and Guttorm and Sir Wilstan are in earnest talk. In which direction shall we next turn the necks of our horses, Sweene?"

"I know not," replied the young man; "such matters I ever leave to Guttorm, who never would let me have my say in aught; and it were an idle thing you know, Githa, to trouble one's head to no purpose. Besides, Githa, to speak plain truth, I ever found that though I could back him indifferently well with my arm at need, the old man's head was clearer than mine to direct and govern."

On joining the others, it was found they had agreed to fly towards Ely, where Ediva would meet her father the Lord of Brunne. The direction in which it lay was alongside a ridge of rocks, stretching out diagonally to the left, a course which necessarily must expose them to the gaze of those within or about the convent. Their horses were, however, fresh and sound, and the start they had already made was a considerable one; besides which they hoped to make it something greater ere their pursuers could collect themselves and follow. Ediva noticed, notwithstanding, with some trepidation, that several men were already on the look-out, and that as soon as she and her companions would leave their concealment, the chase must in all probability begin at once. So it was; for hardly had they emerged from the wood, than a yell from the Normans warned them that they were seen. Cautioning Ediva to sit firm on her saddle, Wilstan struck her palfrey smartly with his whip, causing the mettlesome creature to bound forward; then, setting spurs to his own steed, and urging his companions to use their utmost speed, the little party galloped wildly away. The brow of the hill was soon gained, and as they were about to turn, the youth looked back, and could discern the Norman leader, with angry gestures, directing his followers to pursuit.

"Ride on! ride on!" he then cried; "our path is now level, and we shall gain still more upon them."

"Ay, ay, ride on, ride on," muttered Guttorm, half-dreamily, as he gazed above and around him—"ride on, lest we be o'erta'en by what will prove more dangerous than these men behind be."

There was a gloom in the old man's words which struck a chill to the hearts of all who heard them; nor was it at all dispelled as, following the direction of his eyes, they guessed the import. The morning had been one of intense heat and cloudless splendour; but gradually the sky had become obscured by a thick vapoury haze, revealing only here and there patches of blue and the bright sunshine above. One heavy gush of

wind had boomed heavily through the trees, stripping with its sultry breath part of the young green foliage; then whirled along in the distance, leaving the atmosphere hotter and more oppressive than before. These and other signs foretelling the approach of a storm, had passed unnoticed in the excitement of the time, but now that this was pointed out, the whole party guessed the danger so ominously hinted at by Guttorm, and Ediva inquired anxiously,

"Is the storm so near that we may not reach some place, safe alike from the feus and from the fury of these men?"

"Ride on, ride on," replied the old man. "'Tis an ill-hour, lady, to traverse the flats. Soon there will be a torrent which will cover bog and quagmire, rush and fern."

"It is too true," added Wilstan, in a voice suppressed with emotion; "and, alas! too late to change our route; on every side spread the lowlands of Lincolnshire. The blessed saints guide us or we are lost!"

"Ride on," repeated Guttorm. "That which is our danger is theirs also; and can we but reach some higher point where we may bide, they dare not approach us when the rain has once fairly set in."

A silence ensued, and the horses were urged to their utmost speed. Githa, at last, looking on her mistress, whose disposition ever inclined to be excitable, now heightened the expression of her loveliness, as she sat with a flushed cheek and parted lips, said to her lover,

"How beautiful she is! Say, Sweene, is not that look worthy of Earl Hereward's daughter? Does not its high bearing almost assure us of deliverance from peril?"

"I fear me, Githa, these clouds will not bottle up what is in them for the sake of a pretty face, and in them lies much of our chance of safety," replied the matter-of-fact Sweene. "Look! note you not something white in the distance?"

Githa looked in the direction, and replied:

"Yes, truly, it stands high above the level of the ground. And what of it, Sweene?"

"That if the rain holds but off till we can reach that spot we shall be safe."

"But the Normans! will they not reach us?" inquired Githa.

Sweene looked up at the clouds, when a large drop of rain fell upon his face, from which he shrank as though it had been scalding hot.

"Ride on, dear Githa," he said—"ride for dear life. Soon there will be a flood 'tween us and those that follow they durst not pass. Would to the gods we had measured one half more of the space to yonder neck of land."

"The gods! Sweene, Sweene, there is but one God who can help us in our strait."

"So have you said, Githa," replied Sweene. "I may learn this new doctrine anon; but now there is no time to broach new faiths and new opinions."

Nor was it; for the Normans, having surmounted the hill, were now heard yelling and urging their horses onward. The young man looking back measured their speed as they passed shrub and stone, and saw with much disquiet that the space between the pursuers and the pursued was growing less and less. He marked, too, that while the steeds of his own

party, unaccustomed to such unwonted exercise, showed signs of failing strength, those behind, chosen most probably for their powers of endurance as well as fleetness for a service which might well require both qualities, seemed to gather increased speed with every succeeding footstep. Thus mile after mile was measured, until the face of the country was completely changed, and on every side nothing appeared but an immense flat, stretching out to the horizon. Here brooks, which had washed away the dark peaty loam in their courses during the wet seasons, appeared like veins on the surface, skirted with the slender ash-plant, the alder-bush, and the pollard willow. The mantling pool, moss, furze, and the brown heath, interspersed everywhere with the sharp-spined rush, were the peculiar features of the landscape. These, variegated with the bright yellow flowers of the water-lily, mixed with the atmospheric blue darkening the rim of the far distance, made beautiful in its details a scene which, in its general aspect, appeared monotonous and dreary. Of living creatures nothing could be seen, save such water-fowl as Guttorm and the rest disturbed as they rode along; all else seemed hushed, awaiting the coming storm now indicated by the increased sultriness and the deepening gloom. Suddenly a flash of lightning, followed by a deafening crash, burst forth, and at the same time, heavy drops of rain fell with quickening succession. The palfrey on which Ediva sat startled at the explosion, reared, and would have caused its fair rider (now much exhausted with fatigue) to fall, had not Wilstan, ever alert and watchful, with one hand seized the reins, and with the other supported her sinking form. The effort, however, had nearly caused the youth to lose his own balance, which took him some time to recover, and when he did, vain were his attempts, hampered as he was, to urge forward her steed, while a loud exultant shout behind came on his ears like a knell. Frenzied at what now seemed an inevitable capture, the youth whispered hurriedly to Ediva, then, with a strong effort, lifted her from the saddle and placed her before himself, and, with the others, again set forth, for they likewise had drawn up on seeing the danger to which the young lady was exposed.

"Featly done," said Sweene to his mistress, having eyed the act admiringly. "The weight was more fairly taken than Sir Wilstan's thews seem strung for. To be sure, the Lady Ediva, light and slim, is no great burden; had it been my plumper Githa, the case had been altered, though methinks, if need were, I could lift thee with as much ease."

"If thy strength be put to no greater trial," replied the damsel, "such huge ungainly bones and sinews were surely made to little purpose. But how canst thou jest, with these wretches so near upon us? I could fancy that I hear their very footsteps."

With a slight shudder Githa turned her head, and then exclaimed with terror:

"Gracious Heaven! Sweene, they are about to shoot."

The next moment an arrow-shaft striking upon a stone, glanced thence, and fell not many yards from them; an unwelcome messenger of the dangerous proximity of their foes.

XVIII.

"SEND forth another shaft, Roselin," shouted Gilbert, the Norman leader, to his follower, "and aim it higher; the sweep i' the air will carry it out. That was a lucky flash. The very elements are on our side."

"Beseech ye, hear my words. The elements are against us and them," began the Saxon Bertulph, who still acted as the guide.

"Out, hound," replied Gilbert. "Thou hast before bade us return; but sooner shall the bloodhound quit his scent, than I, once within sight of my prey. Shoot, I say, Roselin, and disable me but one of their horses, and capture is certain. Fie on thee! hast no skill left?" he continued wrathfully, as Roselin again essayed his mark, and again fell short.

"The string is not yet strung, nor the wood grown, which could take this distance," answered the archer, sulkily.

"Spur on then, in the devil's name," rejoined the leader. "Spur on, and get within range."

"Once more, hear me," pleaded the traitor. "Look you, already the heavy drops are splashing on the ground, and soon all that we see will be one vast lake."

"Silence, screech-owl," shouted Gilbert, "lest thy coward spirit move my men."

"Nay, Gilbert," interposed Roselin; "though not over-gifted with courage, the Saxon may have reason in this advice. Look you, if the ground be covered with the wet, we must either stand it out—a thing I have no mind to—or run risk of finding graves ere we be dead in one of these infernal bogs."

"I see but them—my trim young lady and her helpers—before me," responded Gilbert; "them will I have, in spite of rain or fire."

Here another flash came so vividly as for a time almost to blind the party, rebuking the blasphemy of the Norman soldier.

"'Tis madness! 'tis sheer madness!" cried Bertulph. "Nay, already we are lost."

The storm, indeed, now fairly set in, came towards them with a sweeping sound, and in a few moments drenched man and horse. Bubbles rose from the ground, the earth itself seeming to give its contribution to the flood. Then patches in the waste were soon deluged, and momentarily increasing in size joined into others, until large basins were formed on all sides. The pursuit was now brought to a stand, and the leader himself slowly and unwillingly saw that it was no longer practicable, from the dangerous nature of the ground; and his men began to murmur in tones too distinct to be misunderstood, blaming him for the blind rashness which had drawn them to a situation so unenviable. Heedless, however, of such demonstrations, Gilbert sat motionless, glaring upon those whom he had just before felt secure as his prey, but who were now beyond his reach, separated only by a few inches' depth of water, yet impassable that as a gulf would be.

"Baffled, after all!" he muttered, biting his nails with vexation. "My toil spent for naught! Death and the furies!"

"And how long shall we stay here?" asked Roselin, moodily. "The waters already are nigh to the horses' knees. Hear you me, sir captain?" he added, raising his voice, as his leader replied not. "Hear you me?—you who have led us on this mad game, and stand now like a stock; how long, I ask, shall we stay here?"

"Till your feet rot with the wet, for what I care," replied Gilbert, turning savagely upon him.

"Nay, then, we will take the command ourselves," said Roselin. "How say ye, comrades?"

"Ay, ay!" burst from many voices.

"What now! Do ye mutiny, knaves? Let but Fitzosborn know this, and there may be a joint too loose in your necks."

"As good be hanged as drowned," returned Roselin. "We will stay here no longer, but even leave your captainship alone. Sir Saxon renegade, lead the way."

"Too late, too late," cried Bertulph, wringing his hands, and moving not at Roselin's bidding. The men crowded round him, and with oaths and menaces endeavoured to force him to obey.

"Silence, villains!" shouted Gilbert. "We will return; but none shall give the word whilst I am leader. For thee, Roselin, I shall remember to pay off scores at another time with the point of my sword. Curses on it, the clouds seem to have gathered up a sea of rain to empty on us. Haste thee, Bertulph, that we may retrace our steps.

"I dare not," replied the Saxon; "the pitfalls are on every side."

"Try, however," rejoined Gilbert. "Thou mayst, perchance, avoid them; but else thou shalt not live, for by all the saints I will spit thee on my spear if thou movest not on."

The terrified wretch turned his horse's head and tried to urge him on, but the sagacious creature, with the instinct of his kind, resisted every such attempt.

"Lo! thou seest," said the Saxon, appealing to Gilbert. "Even the steed knows the fearfulness of the place. Let the dumb beast teach thee then to desist."

"Take the passage then on foot," was the reply.

Bertulph cast an appealing look from the leader to his men, but met nothing in their savage, sullen faces, to induce a hope that he could plead against the fulfilment of the perilous task. Slowly and with hesitation he accordingly dismounted, and advanced cautiously amid the waste of waters, which had now risen to a considerable height, the Normans watching his movements with eager, though silent interest.

Every step taken by their guide tended to reassure their hearts and increase their hope for deliverance; and when he had progressed some few score yards, they prepared to follow the track he had taken. Hardly had they begun to do so, ere a piercing shriek arrested their movements, and looking in the direction whence it came (for their eyes were now upon the route they were about taking), they saw the wretched Saxon sinking before them, his arms tossed wildly in the air. The treacherous quagmire had seized its prey, who in vain struggled for extrication from its tenacious grasp. Slowly but surely did the unhappy wretch descend, his cries for help becoming more and more shrill and piteous, and answered only by a howl of affright from the Norman party as they gazed upon

the terrific sight before them: they—the latter—bold and fearless as they were in ordinary danger, quailing at the unseen terrible foe now engulphing their late companion. In his efforts, Bertulph had twisted round his body, and his face presented itself in pallid convulsion to the others. His cap was thrown off, and his dark elf locks, matted to his head with the rain, steamed with a profuse sweat. Once only ceased he from his cry—once only ceased his limbs from motion; it was but for a moment, to collect his last remaining force, and spend it in one last struggle. It was in vain. Lower and lower still he went, until the head and arms alone were seen; then came the last frenzied appeal—the head sank and all was over—over! not yet—one hand remained above the surface, and lingered for a while, clutching the air with a concentration of agony too fearful to contemplate. But this, the last vestige of him, likewise soon disappeared, leaving the gazers on overwhelmed with blank despair.

BEFORE THE PLAY.

BY JOHN NAULE ALLEN.

An author who has much to communicate under this head, and expects to have it attended to, may be compared to a man who takes his friend by the button at a theatre door, and seeks to entertain him with a personal gossip before he goes into the play.—CHARLES DICKENS.

AFTER a long day's work at one's desk or among one's books, after prolonged walking through the busy streets, or after anything that wearies without completely overwhelming one, we know of few things pleasanter than a hearty ablution, a change of dress, and a visit to the playhouse, where there are good actors and a good piece, where we may have rest and recreation, where we may have eye and mind delighted and the limbs relaxed—that is, if the seats have backs to them, and you are not pinched for room about the knees—while the play is going on, and may complacently meditate upon the well-performed labours of the day between the acts; and, the performances over, being able, after refreshment among merry companions, to repair to bed and fall asleep, thinking and to dream of the beauty of the actresses. What better? If you will but think so—nothing. And yet, how many there are who go night after night, and show themselves in the boxes, and are never amused, and see nothing grand or beautiful in the lights, or the chandeliers, or the music, or the actresses, or the boxes, or the pit, or the people in them—except, perhaps, themselves. And yet these other things are beautiful, if not to exquisites at least to such as we. Lovely women, handsome men, merry, happy faces, the music, the lights, the laughter, the tears, the actresses, the apple-women, and what not. To us there is hardly anything so delightful as a seat in a well-filled theatre, with a mind at ease and a few shillings in our pocket. We like to join the chorus that calls for the chief actor at the end of the piece,

and to applaud him and the heroine to his hero when he elegantly comes forward with her in answer to the chorus. We help the call for the author when a new play is played, and give him a clap. We stamp impatiently when the curtain remains down ten minutes after it ought to be up, and don't give over till the bell rings. In a word, we make ourself at home quite vulgarly, and never go in with an order.

Besides, plays not only serve to amuse you at the theatre, but are pleasant things to talk of afterwards, and easy. They are fair game for everybody—the recluse and the cosmopolitan. Actors are even more easy to criticise than books, and the critic has no need to be afraid to be caught tripping. Who has not heard a critic say that Biggs was a great actor, and another immediately deny it, and seen the former creep out of it scot free, by taking up the words dear to *Colonel Chaos* in the "Trip to Bath"—"I may be wrong, but that's my opinion"? That's the advantage of being a critic. If we talk history we must come to facts, we suppose—or something like facts—in which we may be deficient; but we may take our breakfast or our dinner comfortably and talk about the play, and so may our companion, whether either of us know aught about it or not. We wish almost that people would go to the theatre oftener and give stupid parties not so often. Why should you cram us into a drawing-room among people who think of nothing but themselves, where we must walk stolidly through a dance to merry music, and observe the stiff proprieties to the letter—where we must listen to folk who cannot sing but will sing—where we must be cut because we are a younger brother, or abused (hardly privately) because we are an elder brother and pay great attention to somebody else's daughter instead of yours—why? Why should we scramble for supper (this sounds like a parody of "Why should we quarrel for riches?") at your house, being able to get it quietly somewhere else? In the theatre we have none of this. We have others to amuse us without any effort of our own—we can be easy in our own way—we have money in our pocket to buy our supper when we come out—above all, if we chose our theatre well, we are not compelled to listen to songsters and songstresses who distract us. It is not unusual for crows to give voice during the whole of an evening, and for nightingales to perch in corners, listeners. Indeed, it is so usual, that we wonder how any drawing-room where a piano is kept can contrive to draw a company together at all. *Benvolio* promised to make *Romeo* think his swan a crow—and didn't; but he might, after all, regain his lost character if he could but come over and persuade a few of our English crows that they are not dying swans.

Thinking thus, why should we not this evening treat ourself to a seat at the Lyceum Theatre? We deserve it. This day we have realised Lord Eldon's words—we have lived like a hermit, and worked like a horse, and added another brilliant chapter to our new novel, "The Blighted Nightcap;" and we will reward ourself, see the play, and think complacently at intervals of our good work as we sit in the merry pit. So we lay aside our manuscript, drink a cup of tea, and then prepare. A wash, a light waistcoat, a brown paletôt with a black velvet collar, and a white hat with a black crape, and we are ready. So the street-door goes to with a bang, for the latch-key is in our pocket, and our heart is in the Highlands. Emerging from a quiet street, which we need

not name, and walking along some other streets almost as quiet, we come to the top of Regent-street, when the noise of fighting dogs just behind us causes us to look round—and, behold! our own rough dog, "Jemmy," worrying the smooth spaniel belonging to the carriage standing at the draper's door. That beast—that Jemmy—has followed us from home, keeping slyly behind us all the way; and we must take him back again: so, returning in the humour of a captain who, after some fair voyaging, is compelled to put back into port, we arrive at our door, open it and give Jemmy a mild kick into the passage, and leave him there to look out for the cat coming down stairs, or to send Mrs. Jennings, our landlady, into hysterics when she treads on him—as may be; and we are on the top of Regent-street again directly.

Is it not busy, and is it not very gay—all these people, and carriages, and shops, and omnibuses? Men and woman, of all kinds and of all nations, going all ways; proud horses tossing their heads opposite shop doors; vehicles of all descriptions miraculously avoiding running into each other, and cads engaged in chaffing brother cads as they jolt along. Used-up men of the loitering pace and dirty linen—used-up in pocket as in other things some of them—and men endeavouring to appear used up, and failing. People on business, and others on pleasure, and gazers into shop windows, and gazers on the ground, and gazers straight a head. All those things which may be seen in Regent-street every afternoon, and which everybody has written about any time since foreigners inhabited Leicester-square, or miserable chickens stalked about dirty streets by day, and roosted in coal-cellars by night, and awoke first-floor lodgers at unseasonable hours in the morning, are in Regent-street this evening: and we are in for the play.

There is one cad here, that is near to us, now. He has just been making some observations audible at thirty paces, but ostensibly quite privately, to an inside passenger seated near the door, on the rounded form of a foot-passenger's back, and having laughed at that to set others to laugh too, he fixes his deadly eye upon our hat. We think we know what is coming; but, providentially, his bus suddenly stops, whereby his attention is taken off us, and another object offers itself for his humour. A carriage, driven by a man in flaming livery, has placed itself awkwardly in the way at some distance from the kerb, where it is waiting for its owners, who are at present in the toy-shop.

"Now, Mr. Chawbacon," says the driver of the omnibus to the man in livery, "where are you a going to?"

Mr. Chawbacon takes no notice of this question, and appears not to be going anywhere just now. Though evidently hurt by the contumely epithet applied to him, he is yet above holding parley with a mere busman.

"Do you hear, Mr. Gardener?" shouts the latter.

This is too much for a coachman who is proud of being one, and he turns fiercely round and says, "Are you talking to me?"

"Yes, Mr. Gardener, I am talking to you. I see how it is; the coachman's poorly, and they've put you to drive till he gets better. Well, only mind and don't break your neck."

Jehu looks like offended Jove, the bus passengers all laugh, the bus drives past, the cad opens the last volley, and the coachman is igno-

maniously shut up—to the delight of a small body of boys of course, who always are everywhere. We know that a result of this little occurrence will be, that Jehu will cut into his horses rather more than usual when he drives away, and that the busman will rise in the estimation of his passengers, some of the most valiant of whom will most likely feel inclined to stand glasses of beer for him. But, however that may be, the throngs of people bent on other things roll on, with their gay and simple dresses, their rags and trinkets, their anxious and pleasant faces, their honest and villanish hearts, and we go with them. Past the woman with apples and gingerbread, past the man with little "dawgs," past the footman with the white stockings and the calves, past everything and everybody. What to us the Corso of the Romans, the Boulevards of the Parisians, the Toledo of the Neapolitans, or the Po-de-Mogochoya of our friends at Bucharest? Give us the Regent-street of the Cockneys, out of which we now are, however, and in the Haymarket, at six o'clock this evening.

Never mind what evening. If you would allow us to indulge in a paradox, we would say that this evening is not to-day, because Her Majesty's Theatre is open; and the Colonnade is on the *qui vive* in consequence, with books-of-the-words vendors at every step to annoy us. Spiteful man cannot madden his brother, who is a swell, more than by mistaking his swelldom for the swelldom of an hour and not of perpetuity; and we could almost swear at them because all these perambulating merchants seem to think that we have got on our Sunday clothes to go to the gallery in. There is one of these merchants at every yard, and they all ask us if we want a book—so we have to say "No, no, no," from one end of the Colonnade to the other, like letting off a long series of popguns. Thrupp was not more insulted by Downing. Thrupp was a little, dark-looking, dirty fellow, but very clever (all little, dark-looking, dirty fellows are clever, and will only work when they like), and once on a time, for some unknown reasons, he had purged and promised to live cleanly, like a gentleman, when he happened to meet Downing, who was a handsome, dissolute fellow—always saying what he thought, and pleasing the world and offending individuals; and the two had no sooner shaken hands than Downing started back, as the Primrose family must have done when they beheld the immortal spectacles, and exclaimed, "Why, Thrupp, you have got a clean face!"—the consequence of which expression was that Thrupp became ashamed of anything so conspicuous, and again cultivated dirt with success. And this is almost sufficient to make us throw aside our splendid hat, and paletôt and vest, and dress quietly ever afterwards, especially when, farther on, a member of the Shoe-black Brigade, who is doing no business, places himself before us, and, pointing to our boots, feebly murmurs "Polish!" A cad inquiring if we are going to the Bank advances our vexation another step—what the deuce should we go to the Bank for at this time of day? moreover, the inquiry twits us with the recollection that we never had any business there, and in all probability never shall have—and we arrive at the pinnacle of our disgust by having a printed bill thrust in our hands, and, on reading it, finding it headed "To smart young men who want a hat." At least, this would be the state of our mind if we had not the temper of an angel; but having that, we arrive at length at the door of the Lyceum in the best of humours; besides, we have

Charles Mathews before our mind's eye amusing us, and the fair ladies who have bills to sell, seeing us halt, are so attentive and pressing, and they all say "Sir" so politely. In the pit-passage the people are mustering, and some of the more impatient spirits are squeezing up to the doors at the top of it, ready to rush in as soon as the bolts are withdrawn and take the best seats by storm; and the quieter class stand nearer the street, with that quiet melancholy look upon them which ever obtains so much when folks are waiting for the doors to open, or when they are on a racecourse where there is nobody they know, or when they have gone in somewhere to have a glass of ale they didn't want for the purpose of seeing the evening paper, and have to wait till the very old gentleman, who is extremely slow, and whom they don't like to hurry on account of his age for fear of hurting his feelings, has done with it; and some of the knowing gentlemen who love to occupy the front rows of the pit, and to turn round between the acts and gaze boldly at the box company through hired lorgnettes, have wisely entered the side-door of the Lyceum Tavern, and are quietly discussing exhilarating beverages.

Let us take a turn or two in the street till the doors open. We have not to walk a great number of yards to be able to stand before and gaze into a confectioner's shop-window, into which at the same moment are gazing a pair of excellent, stout people—that is to say, Mr. and Mrs. Gilpin. They likewise are going to the play, and the lady has got a little basket on her arm, and to the contents of which they are meditating upon adding confectionary. Mr. Gilpin is difficult to please, and when his wife asks him what he could like, he says he don't know; but as he is a fat, wheezy gentleman, of slow locomotion—of the florid style of architecture, we may say—and not inclined to be over and above civil, we think he could like to keep a public-house. They will go to the pit, of course, and will be very hot all the while, and somewhat voracious between the acts, and will laugh when they ought not to; and Mrs. Gilpin will continually say in a low tone, "Dear, dear!" or "Well, I declare!" at the eccentricities of Mr. Frank Matthews—that is, if they are not going to the Adelphi, as it is likely they are, when the lady will "Dear, dear!" or make her declaration in consequence of the very singular behaviour of Mr. Paul Bedford.

We wish our friend Snooper of the Treasury was going there too; but there is no such luck, for he has shaken hands with us, and hooked his arm in ours, and informed us that he is going to the pit of the Lyceum—like electricity. A singular fellow is Snooper; but then, where would you seek for singularities if not in gentlemen of the Treasury? Who sing your comic songs at evening parties, or imitate your inimitable actors, or crack jokes taken out of the early volumes of *Punch*, or lean over the rails of Rotten-row, and know everybody that goes past, or enjoy themselves most at Epsom, but Cooper and Booper, and Hooper and Snooper, of the Treasury? When you had that glorious pic-nic, who was it but one of these gentlemen that played "Scenes that are brightest" and the "Irish Washerwoman" on the cornet-à-piston, and drank too much champagne, which led him to declare himself to Fanny Foster, and who rued next day all that he had done the day before—the declaration included—which caused such fun for other Treasury men, and so much vexation to Fanny Foster and her friends? Jolly fellows, those

of the Treasury! They make queer speeches at Christmas parties, and propose toasts like "Mrs. Bounce and her charming daughters, of whom I will say this——" They are favourites with the ladies, and pretend to be so well up in politics, and talk about the golden days of Mr. Pitt, and make such thundering mistakes! Even those dullest and most namby-pamby of all dull and namby-pamby beings—the people who write the works on etiquette—cannot leave the Treasury men alone when they are in want of an odd illustration. In one of these works, which we caught a friend of ours reading one morning (he was going into society in the evening), we found a little tale. Lord —— and Timbs of the Treasury were taking refreshment at the same hotel and at the same table, when, to the honour of that "old nobilitie," whose overpowering virtues Lord John Manners sings, his lordship condescended to enter into conversation with his humble but amiable neighbour, who was much elated thereat, as he ought to have been, and they parted. Now Timbs did not understand etiquette—to his confusion be it spoken—and some time after, again meeting with his lordship, he accosted him; but the lord affected ignorance of his interlocutor.

"My lord," said the latter—and we can just imagine him saying it—"don't you know me? I am Mr. Timbs of the Treasury."

"Well, then," said the aristocrat—"well, then, Mr. Timbs of the Treasury, I wish you a very good morning."

Jolly fellows! Colonel Sibthorp may attack the Treasury benches tooth and nail; but he is too much of a humorist himself to say anything against Cooper, or Booper, or Hooper, or Snooper, or even against Timbs.

But about Snooper. He soon begins to advise us not to buy any apples of the street people, or, at any rate, not to eat them, on account of the expense and inconvenience attendant thereon. A pennyworth of apples so bought, he says, generally costs sevenpence at least, because of the warm brandy-and-water you are obliged to take after them, and which so taken, you do not enjoy; and he follows that up by saying *we* are going to the Lyceum, of course. We cannot deny it, albeit we could almost dispense with Snooper's company there. Anywhere else we can do with him, but in a theatre—no. We might get over his pointing out the people in the boxes to us, his giving them all wrong names, his telling us little anecdotes about them, and his fibbing like a Dutch auctioneer; but the worst of him is, that he has never done talking, and when the play is going on he will persist in telling us what such an actor will do next—which he will not—and so on, causing us to lose the joke at which everybody is laughing, but which, when you ask one of your neighbours what it was, he is sure not to have caught. Especially will our friend come out, if he happen to be seated near to an old gentleman from the country, whom he will be always telling to look out for Mr. Roxby coming up a trap-door standing on his head, or that Charles Mathews will bring a live horse on the stage in the next scene. "A fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy"—Snooper. And yet it can be readily understood that we could contrive to dispense with his vivacious and loquacious company; but that is no reason why we should offend him or hurt his feelings, so we stick to him, and he sticks to us, like bricks—as he would say.

And the entrance to the pit begins to fill, and the people nearest the doors then begin to think they never *will* be opened; and cabs are turning the corner of Wellington-street to the boxes; and little half-clad lads are shouting "Apples!" and middle-aged gentlemen, studiously inclined, are reading the play-bills; and young men, gayer students, are feeling in the pockets to see if their latch-keys are all right; and other young men, gayer still, with long hair and large collars, and small hats stuck on the top of their heads—having, indeed, a very Cider-cellarish appearance—are casting sheep's-eyes towards some of the sex, and look as if they neither cared for bills nor latch-keys—there are many other persons and things besides. The heavy bars are heard to be raised, the doors open, and all those persons who are inclined, and Snooper and I are of them, walk into the pit of the Lyceum.

When we come out, perhaps it will rain, and perhaps we shall not, like two ancient Romans, incline to indulge in the luxury of the theatre *and* the bath—wherefore we may repair to the Cave of Harmony, where Snooper may volunteer a comic song some time in the morning, which, like all such songs so volunteered, is sure to be a very bad one, though insufficient to prevent its singer from feeling very happy within himself. And if he go to bed and awake with a headache, why it will not be the first time, and will have gone off by evening, when Snooper's himself again.

ALMA.

BY JOHN J. WALTERS.

Lift up your voice, Old Europe! we have met the foe at last,
Who would have dared to make you laws with a Cossack's trumpet blast;
We met him on his own good ground, where one man was as ten,
And like a lion in our might we rent him there and then.
Strong was that eagle's eyrie on the Alma's topmost bank,
And gallant were the hearts within each well-defended rank.
We grudge them not their 'vantage ground, ourselves had done the same,
Had we to fight another foe who bore the Briton's name.

The spearsmen of the Don were there, the Cossacks of Ukraine,
The fearless riders of the steppe, the preyers of the slain;
The steel-cased horsemen of the Guard, the Neva's Voltigeur,
The shaggy steed and sheepskin cloak of Ural's mountaineer;
The lengthened rows of limbered guns like sullen fiends at rest,
Where slept the spirits God had cast from the eternal blest;
The serried columns in the rear, beneath t heir eagles' wings,
Whose numbers had astounded earth, and chilled the hearts of kings.

Now, England, is thy hour of need, now France where are thy sons?
Do you not hear the tyrant speak in the thunder of his guns?
Do you not see each vineyard gleam with their Russian steel,
And every cannon answer well the war-gods thunder-peal?

Again! again! the fleecy cloud, the thunderbolt of war,
The figures seen amid the smoke, the battle-smiths of Thor.
Again! again! the lightning flash, the shout that tells their skill,
O God! how furious are the men who once have learned to kill!

The bugle sound, the open space, the black train rushing by,
The battle-flush on every cheek, the blood-lust in each eye;
The hoarse command, the clanking charge of mail-clad cuirassier,
The thunder as each squadron bursts all foaming from the rear;
The iron death—the carnage rent through all that proud array,
The struggle of the wounded steed on battle's red causeway;
The frequent flash along the cliffs where climbs the Tirailleur,
The shout of welcome when above the daring Zouaves appear.

Into the smoke, line after line, the blue ranks fade away,
And Gaul goes in for glory as in her old Imperial day.
Nerved by the fate of many fields she fronts her foe of old,
To pay the debt of vengeance which their fathers had enrolled.
Speak out the war-drums in hot haste their mandate to each man,
And breaks the cloud—a ridge of steel—the Chasseurs de Vincennes.
Leaps out red havoc on their path,—the grey-coats break away,
And glancing through their sea of steel the tricolor makes way.

But where is Albion in the fray? hath she no place at all,
That grim old glory-reaper, who hath nations at her call?
Where are those stalworth sons of hers, who boast in every land
That where the battle is most fierce there England takes her stand?
Oh! ever in the van of fight she never changed that creed,
Nor faltered on her fiery way, no matter who might bleed.
The same old valour hems her round that never yet shall fail,
Whilst striking with the red right-hand will make a tyrant quail.

Look where the green hill changes fast into a blush of red—
Look where the hail of battle tears the Alma's foaming bed—
Look where St. George's banner climbs that gore-empurpled height—
Look at the hearts who guard it round like gods in battle might.
The glory of our western land wrapped in the smoke of death,
Seen for a moment by the flash of every cannon's breath,
They are up! they win! their bayonets flash—the Old Land's battle shout—
And then the havoc, life for life, the carnage, and the rout.

Ay! England, she did well her part, the lion's share of old,
And in the trench on Alma's side her bravest hearts are cold.
And with them sleep their brothers, too, the Green Isle's daring sons,
Who stepped from glory into death before the carnage guns.
Be not forgot old Scotland when thy kilted dead lay round,
To mark where valour rested last on victory's red ground;
Yet 'twas a glorious purchase that the free could only make,
To smite a haughty tyrant for a weaker brother's sake.

THE ROBBER'S WIFE.

A ROMANCE.

By William Roper.

V.

He, half forgetting danger and defeat,
Returns their greeting as a chief may greet,
Wrings with a cordial grasp Anselmo's hand,
And feels he yet can conquer and command!

Byron.

And thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.
Twelfth-Night; or, What you Will.

"Alas! for the instability of human happiness, on what a slender foundation is the fabric raised! What toil does it cost to place it in fancied security! and how easily, in a moment, is it wrecked!

"We scarce can form a wish ere it is defeated, and yet we continue to dream visions of joy, and dare to hope that the dream will prove true at last. Untaught by repeated disappointments, we are still the fools of our own wishes. We chase a spectre which is constantly flying before us, and when at last we have overtaken it, we thrust forth our hands and grasp only empty air. Like the builders of the Tower of Babel, we are continually erecting a structure whose summit soars to the clouds, but which suddenly falls about our ears and threatens to overwhelm us in its ruins."

Thus soliloquised Leopold Klieber, as he lay, heavily manacled, in the deepest and gloomiest cell of the prison at Darmstadt. And truly his situation and prospects might well induce reflections thus hopeless and despairing. Snatched from freedom in the very moment when, for the first time, life appeared to have happiness in store—reft of the only being he loved on earth—and left to the anticipation of a violent and ignominious end—what wonder that his firm nerves gave way under the shock, and a flood of tears—the first he had shed since childhood—burst from his burning eyelids and bedewed his swarthy cheeks?

But the weakness—if such it could be called—was not of long continuance. Before a human eye had beheld them he dashed aside the crystal evidences of woe, and collected the great, though misdirected, energies of his soul to bear with becoming firmness what thousands would have shrunk from the mere contemplation of.

He did not deceive himself as to his probable fate. He knew his doom was sealed—that there was no hope of life; but it would be to inquire too curiously to ask if in such an hour the prevalent feeling in his mind was that of remorse for the past, or dread of the hereafter. The ideas of men who have led such a life as that of the robber-chief, with regard to the world beyond the grave, are generally but slight and undefinable; and it is to be feared that the captive's thoughts reverted oftener to her whose life he had embittered, and whom he was leaving broken-hearted behind, than to Him before whose throne he might shortly be called to appear.

The trial, as Wolfort had predicted, was conducted with very little delay. The prisoner, as he entered the hall of justice, read his condemnation in the faces of those around, and before the verdict was given; and when the proceedings had terminated, and he was sentenced to be *broken on the wheel*, the words fell upon his ear like the mere repetition of what his own heart had foretold; and as he was carried back to his cell his countenance wore an aspect of calm indifference, which surprised the guards who conducted him.

Not so was it, however, with the good citizens of Darmstadt. They were thrown into a state of excitement almost bordering on frenzy by the joyful and exhilarating prospect of a public execution. And *such* a culprit, too! The great robber, Leopold Klieber, who had been the terror of the whole country! Would he make good that reputation of dauntless courage which had been ascribed to him? or would he quail from the scaffold—that terrible instrument of blood and death? These were questions which goaded to the utmost the curiosity of the gossips, and which time only could solve. And so they waited with eager impatience the approach of the day of execution.

At length the eventful morning arrived, and at an early hour the square in which the scaffold was erected was crowded with a motley throng of all classes of the inhabitants. The tender sex mustered in great numbers; and as people at a festival always require refreshment, the vendors of fruit and biscuits drove that morning a thriving trade.

After a delay of about an hour, the long looked-for *cortége* appeared in sight, slowly advancing up the street which led from the prison to the scaffold. The procession was headed by a number of priests, clothed in the flowing vestments of their order, and immediately after them came the criminal, closely guarded on all sides, but walking with a firm and unfaltering step, and having a calm and composed countenance. A strong body of cavalry brought up the rear. They reached the scaffold, and the robber unhesitatingly mounted the steps, disdaining the proffered assistance of the priest who ascended with him. Every eye in the vast assemblage which thronged the square was fixed upon the prisoner. The last offices of the churchman were performed, and the executioner advanced to bind his victim; he laid his hand upon his shoulder, when at that moment a pistol-shot was fired from below, and the unhappy functionary staggered and fell. The ball had entered his brain.

The next instant the whole street was a scene of reckless confusion. The guards, imagining a conspiracy amongst the people to rescue the culprit, rode indiscriminately into the crowd, and striking right and left, endeavoured to disperse them. The people fell back on each other, and many were trampled under foot. Shrieks, groans, yells, and execrations of every kind rent the air; and in the mean time the prisoner, having burst the bonds which confined his hands, was struggling violently with the deceased executioner's three assistants, one of whom he had already hurled from the platform, when two powerful men sprung suddenly upon it, and he found himself hurried down the steps in the friendly grasp of Wolfort and Karl Ribnitz. At the same moment he perceived Von Hallé, Max, Herman, and the rest of the robbers, raging like lions through the streets, and driving the panic-stricken soldiers before them in every direction.

"Here is your sword, captain," said Wolfort; and added, "To join Von Hallé we must cut our way through the crowd!"

In a few minutes this was accomplished, and the robbers receiving their leader with a loud shout of joy, prepared for a rapid but orderly retreat.

The soldiers—their officers having been all marked and shot down—were daunted by the bold front which the bandits presented, and made no effort to intercept them; so that in a very short space of time the robbers had cleared the town, and were marching rapidly through the country beyond, towards a spot where their horses were picketed.

Having reached the place, they all immediately mounted, and Wolfort turning to Klieber, as if waiting for instructions, said, "Where now, captain?"

"Wherever you please," replied Klieber, in a tone of cold indifference.

There was a momentary pause, and then Wolfort said:

"Captain, this is ungrateful. We have saved your life at the risk of our own safety, and you requite the service with disdain. We know all! You would desert us for the sake of a foolish girl. Look not thus frowningly. I must speak—less for myself than for the sake of this band of brave men who have spilt their blood as water in your cause! You are necessary to us, and we are necessary to you. Do not imagine you can do without us. You are a marked man—in the eye of the law the greatest criminal of us all! Go where you may, you can never find safety and unmolested repose. The vengeance of man will dog your footsteps, let them turn wherever they will! Will you then dispense with those whose courage is your shield—who have fenced you round like a wall of brass, and who love you better than brothers? Do not, I implore you! Remember your oath to remain true to us. Remember the bond of blood there is between us, which nothing can ever wash out! Remember your debt of vengeance, and the injuries you have received! What is there you can ask that our swords will not procure? Your bride has been taken from you; say but the word, and we will win her back. Are you ambitious? Here are the arms which shall work out your designs! Captain, I know your nature better than you do yourself. You wish for repose, you think. But I tell you, you are thoroughly a man of action. It is the condition of your existence. If you could procure undisturbed retirement, you would pine away in it, like the caged lion who has been torn from his native forests!——"

"Say no more!" exclaimed Klieber, interrupting him. "I feel—I know that you are right, Wolfort! I cannot live in friendship with a world which seeks my blood. It was a dream—a pleasing dream; but it is past! I owe you my life, and I am not ungrateful for the service. Here, by this sword, which I grasp again in freedom, I swear a new oath to be true to you until death! This night—this very night, will I lead you on an enterprise in which you shall reap wealth and deal out justice!"

The robbers brandished their swords above their heads, and replied with a loud and joyous "Huzza!"

The night was dark and tempestuous; the thunder muttered threateningly over the hills, and vivid flashes of lightning alone broke the gloom

But however great the desolation which filled the forest and valley, it was surpassed by that which reigned in the Castle of Falkenberg. There the voice of woe was the only sound which broke the stillness of night; for in a small but richly-furnished turret-chamber, which had been her favourite room from childhood, lay the hapless daughter of the baron, with the Angel of Death hovering round her pillow.

The trials she had undergone had proved too much for her delicate frame. Torn from her husband at the moment when, as she fondly believed, her influence had won him back to virtue, she had in vain endeavoured to stem the force of her father's vengeance, and had been compelled to bow to the decree which condemned him she loved to the gallows. Deceived, abused, broken-hearted, her strength at last gave way, and Death, who so frequently spares the wretched to destroy the fortunate, resolved to become the friend of the suffering girl.

And there she lay, unconscious of all around her, for delirium raged unchecked; and the name of him who had betrayed her was the theme of constant ravings.

Her father stood by her bedside, with remorse in every feature; while on the opposite side sat the old female domestic who had been her attendant since childhood; and the young and unfortunate Count Lindorf, with folded arms and sorrowful brow, was stationed at the foot of the couch.

How long they had been thus it matters not. The approach of dissolution was slow but sure, and they watched it in agony of heart. Suddenly the profound silence in the castle was broken by the quick report of fire-arms from without, and at the same moment old Rodolf, the steward, came hurrying up the stairs, and was met by Count Lindorf on the threshold of the sick-room. The old domestic was pale with terror, and trembled in every limb.

"What is the matter?" asked the count.

"Oh, my lord count, the castle is attacked! Where is my master? where is my master?"

"The castle attacked! By whom?" said the count. "You are mad to say it!"

At this moment the baron came from the chamber in time to catch the next words of Rodolf.

"I tell you the castle is attacked by robbers! Hark! they have already gained the hall!"

And at this instant a rush of feet was heard in the apartment below, mingled with the cries of the terrified domestics; and one voice, which the baron well knew, rising distinctly above the din, exclaimed:

"Harm none but they who oppose you! I come but to claim my own."

"'Tis that villain Klieber!" exclaimed the baron; and, drawing his sword, he hurried down the broad staircase, followed by Count Lindorf and the steward.

But in the corridor below their progress was impeded by a crowd of frightened servants, who clung to the baron's knees and implored his protection; and before he could free himself from them he was confronted by Klieber, who appeared sword in hand, followed by Von Hallé, Wolfort, and half a dozen of the stoutest freebooters. For a moment no one

spoke, and the old nobleman, standing face to face with the dreaded chieftain, returned the stern scrutiny of the latter with a glance to the full as fearless. At length his anger mastered him, and he exclaimed fiercely:

"Escaped convict! vile gallows-bird! what seek you here?"

"I come to reclaim my wife, whom you have torn from me," replied the robber, sternly.

"And you think, insolent villain that you are, that the daughter of Baron Falkenberg will share her fate with yours?"

"I do. And if she be not restored to me peaceably I will recover her by force. In which case I will not leave one stone of this castle standing upon another."

The baron grew livid with rage. But regaining his self-command by a strong effort, he said, as if struck by a sudden idea,

"If I will lead you to her, dare you follow me singly?"

The robber hesitated a moment, and then replied:

"I dare." Then turning to his followers, he added: "Wait for me here, and see that none quit the castle."

"Hold, captain," cried Wolfort, laying his hand upon his arm; "take heed what you do. If this should be a snare?"

"In that case you will know how to avenge me."

"True," answered Wolfort; "and we will make these halls run blood."

"Lead on," said Klieber. And he followed the baron up the stairs.

Arrived at the door of the sick-chamber, the baron paused with his hand upon the lock, as if striving against sudden emotion; and Klieber himself was slightly agitated, from a vague presentiment of some unknown evil.

"Enter!" said the baron, throwing open the door; and Klieber passed into the room.

The next instant he was standing as if riveted to the floor. Not a word—not a sigh escaped him. The power of speech was for the moment paralysed, and like the men of old who were turned into stone by gazing on the head of Medusa, the robber gazed on the pallid face of Agnes with a countenance equally colourless.

The baron saw his emotion, and felt that he was avenged.

"Behold!" he said, pointing to the bed. "This is your work."

At this moment the dying girl slowly unclosed her eyes (for she had been sleeping). Their glance fell upon the well-known form of her destroyer, and she closed them again, bewildered.

"Agnes!" cried the robber, throwing himself on his knees by the bedside, and speaking in tones of indescribable anguish—"Agnes! my wife! my lost, my injured Agnes! look up—speak to me! Say that you recognise me—that you forgive me. But one glance, one word, some sign, however slight, to quench the fire that is feeding upon my heart"

At the sound of that remembered voice the eyes of Agnes were again unclosed. A sweet seraphic smile arose to her lips, and she stretched forth her hand, which Klieber eagerly pressed to his bosom. There was a vain effort to articulate, followed by a faint gurgling in the throat—and then the features became locked, and the gentle heart of the robber's wife ceased its pulsations for ever!

Thus liv'd—thus died she. Never more on her
Shall sorrow light or shame!

"If our captain come not soon, we will go seek him," said Hans Wolfort, becoming impatient; "and if we find that foul play has been offered him——"

The remainder of his speech was cut short by the sudden report of a pistol-shot in the chamber above their heads, followed immediately by the fall of a heavy body.

"Treachery! treachery!" shouted the robbers. And thrusting aside Count Lindorf and the servants, they rushed simultaneously up the stairs.

They were met on the landing above by the baron, who exclaimed in a deprecating tone,

"He has fallen by his own hand!"

"You lie, villain," roared Wolfort, frantically; "he has been murdered by you."

And without more ado he raised his sword and clove the unfortunate nobleman's skull; and then springing carelessly over the body as it fell before him, rushed into the chamber of death, followed by his companions.

A fearful spectacle met their view. On one side stood the bed containing the lifeless form of Agnes, with the old female domestic weeping over it, and in the centre of the room lay the dead body of Leopold Klieber in a pool of his own blood, his right hand still grasping a recently discharged pistol—corroborative of the unfortunate baron's assertion. The robber had blown his brains out!

Wolfort and the rest fled aghast from the apartment, and rejoining their comrades below, held a hurried consultation amongst them; the result of which was that they plundered the castle of everything they could bear away, and then resolving to give their dead captain a noble funeral pyre, set fire to the edifice in several places.

After this the band returned to their customary haunt, the cavern in the forest; and there, having made equal division of the spoil, they dispersed in various directions, and sought refuge in foreign lands.

The castle was burnt to the ground, but Count Lindorf and the domestics escaped unhurt, and the young nobleman returned again to his ancestral estates at Ulm. There he afterwards contracted a marriage with the daughter of a neighbouring nobleman; but though the alliance proved a happy one, he never completely recovered from the shadow which the terrible events we have recorded had thrown upon his spirit. Moreover, he never entirely ceased to reproach himself for having indulged in the revel with Klieber at the inn of the Black Eagle, which lost him his papers, and thereby laid the foundation of the evils that afterwards ensued.

The same night on which the Castle of Falkenberg was destroyed, the ruined "Tower of Refuge" was struck by lightning and levelled entirely with the earth; and tradition goes on to say that a tall female figure, robed in white garments, was seen by some peasants standing on one of the shattered fragments, and was heard to shriek in a voice which thrilled fearfully distinct above even the warring of the elements:

"The accursed race of Falkenberg is no more!"

After which the figure vanished, and has never since been seen near the spot which it formerly haunted.

A FEW CHAPTERS ON THE WORKING CLASSES.

VI.—Conclusion.

BY E. P. ROWSELL, ESQ.

Unkind poor man to push me off the kerbstone merely because I had a decent coat upon my back—unkind rich man to fancy, because the man following somewhat closely behind thee had a shabby appearance, that he must be seeking to pick thy pocket!

Five chapters have we now devoted to the consideration of various points connected with the welfare of the working man. We have apologised before, and we apologise again, for the introduction of a topic involving, undeniably, but little of amusement, and dependent for its interest entirely upon its importance. Our brief chapters, closed in as they have been necessarily each month by the sparkling tale or spirited sketch, have, confessedly, even to our own eyes, had a dreary aspect, the lengthy paragraphs have looked exceedingly uninviting, and we have felt, "Well, if nobody has perused a line of our articles, we must not grumble, for most certainly we, ourselves, in the position of an ordinary reader, should not have turned to them so long even as the advertisements remained unread."

But we have not been discouraged. Our intention, at least, was not undeserving of approbation. It may be difficult to make interesting a lecture upon the good effects of harmony and kind feeling whether in families or communities, but who shall gainsay the arguments contained in such lecture, or refuse to admit the wisdom of their being perpetually and vigorously urged? And as neither will any deny that the theme of the working man's welfare is one which Christian sympathy and profound policy alike call upon us to entertain and carefully to ponder, it may, indeed, have come to pass that *when* the light tale and the startling romance have been finished, and when, perhaps, in extreme cases, the advertisements have been read, the eye has turned to the dull-looking chapters, and the thought has inclined to the very unsentimental but very useful consideration of the means by which tears now rolling down unwashed cheeks may be arrested, swelling hearts covered by fustian vests may be quieted, and tongues now too often used in the sending forth hideous execrations may be occupied in the declaring man's sinfulness and God's love.

We have dwelt, as we believe, upon all the main topics connected with the well-being of the working man, and we have to say, in conclusion, but little more than that if the working man be but true to himself, rely upon himself, and go forth honestly and boldly in his humble path, he may be one of the happiest creatures in existence. Troubles he must have just as the millionaire and the middle-class man must have troubles, but most certainly do we believe that it is no delusion—no mere clap-trap notion, but an actual, positive fact, that the right-minded and industrious artisan or labourer is in a better position for securing—not ecstatic enjoyment, not

proud exultation, not splendid triumphs, but calm, quiet, unbroken gratification through life, than any other individual in any class who could be pointed out. The working man's simple pleasures will occupy to him the position which huge delights do to the man of great wealth. The working man's pains are not more severe than the rich man's sorrows. The working man's responsibilities are of feather-weight compared with those which form such a set-off to a well-lined pocket. So that there should be no grumbling on the part of my humble friend because he has not a fine carriage to ride in and a splendid service of plate to exhibit on his dinner-table each day. If he be in good work, has health and strength, and his family (if he has any) are also strong and hearty, and act as he would have them, he may, indeed, complacently regard the princely mansion and the powdered footman, and be pleasantly conscious that in all probability he is happier, and in the true sense richer, than the possessor of these showy advantages.

And do not let my friend hold that strange notion that every respectably clothed man is his enemy. Why *will* he shove me as he passes me? Why *will* he suppose that I am inclined to shove *him* because he wears a coarse coat and a cloth cap? The working man, undeniably, is very suspicious. He so often has an idea that even an act of kindness is prompted by an evil motive—that it is a covert insult—that at the bottom there is an intention to degrade and humble him. How often has the visitor at the poor cottage in the country been almost summarily ejected for venturing to proffer aid under distressing circumstances? There can be no objection to what is termed "honest pride" in any one; there is the strongest reason to condemn the far-fetched and most mischievous feeling that a service from a superior can never be accepted without loss of independence and self-respect.

Of course the opposite evil must be carefully avoided. Of course a reliance for aid upon a superior is likely to become mischievous. As we stated in our chapter on Life Assurance, &c., the effect of being utterly cast in times of sickness or trouble upon the bounty of the rich is lamentably to lower the recipient in his own estimation, and to weaken that legitimately proud self-dependent spirit which ought ever to rule within the working man. But a churlishness or surliness even at the proffer of such favours as the rich man may and ought frequently to render to his poorer brother is equally an evil, and is therefore carefully to be shunned.

If my friend will but cast his eyes around him at this time he will be greatly encouraged. Emphatically, in whatever way he may have been treated in times past, he is *not* neglected now. In those periods when blustering demagogues clamoured most, did the working man's condition degenerate and his power weaken; in these days, when everywhere quietude and peace prevail, the welfare of the lower classes has a vast share of the attention of the wealthy, influential, and intelligent, and it is steadily and strikingly progressing. The wreck of property, the murder and desolation attendant upon tumult and general riot, bring no advantage to the working class, who suffer in the sufferings of their superiors. It is when peace abroad and at home is smiling upon us that the poor man's condition is happiest, and his spirit lightest. When the lord

moans the labourer has small cause to laugh, for the chances are, the moan will presently be heard in his own dwelling, and will not cease until prosperity has been restored to the noble's mansion.

Every year as it passes seems to bring some fresh evidence of the real, substantial greatness of the land in which we have been born. It is not simply with a pardonable, but with a very laudable pride, that we regard the main characteristics of old England. The spirit of fairness, of equity, pervades our constitution, runs through all our dealings amongst ourselves or with others, is preserved in every main feature and every subordinate arrangement. No one class has undue advantage over another class; at the same time, kind assistance is rendered to those in the lower classes to help them to rise into higher, and in those cases where the upward movement is accomplished, there is no jealousy, no mean coolness,—there is a manifestation of real delight, and a hearty and joyful reception. We may be a nation of shopkeepers, but we are also a nation of honest men. We may not be fond of cutting throats, and we may smile grimly at notions of glory when coupled with broken hearts and ruined homes; but we can open up sources of enjoyment which can make the mighty hall resound with merriment, and the humble cottage brimful of peace and gladness. And when we *are* attacked, and, sore against our will, must go forth to fight for our principles of justice and of truth, we can show that our calmness must not be construed as cowardice, nor our hatred of carnage an unwillingness to shed our heart's blood in defence of a good and righteous cause.

The humbler classes—did they fail us when the note of war sounded, and the cry was heard for numbers to go forth, in great probability to die in anguish in a foreign land?—did they fail us when, recently, death in every frightful shape was busy, and did his best to make the cheek blanch and the heart sicken? Nay, worthy sons of our old, old land, they had within them the spirit which had led their fathers on to deeds blazoned in the records of fame, and full of love of life and home they rushed, so many of them, to death and the grave. Fancy the little cottage, with the jessamine and honeysuckle falling in clusters over its windows; fancy the aged parent, the loving sister; fancy the anguish of the parting of the young soldier; fancy the thrill created by news of a great battle; fancy the ghastly shock when in the list of killed is read that dear, dear name; fancy the blighting of every hope, the casting down of every bright expectation, and the entrance of bitter despair, and you will feel how deep is our debt of gratitude to the humble but resolute men who give up all to prosecute the quarrel which we are content to talk about at our firesides, and who win for us the victories which we but celebrate in bumpers of champagne.

THE LAST OF THE HOUSE.

By William Pickersgill, Esq.

XXVI.

LAURA MORTON.

Two days subsequent to the interview I have described in the last chapter, Merton arrived in London. He had packed up his wearing apparel, and, without informing Messrs. Worm, Grub, and Co., or, indeed, almost any of his friends, had precipitately departed. On his arrival in the metropolis, he had sought out apartments of an humble, indeed, character, but in every way suited to his means, and to the prospect that lay before him. He had a little money in hand, and a few pictures, which he intended to try to dispose of. This was the first time he had been in London, and everything he therefore saw had all the freshness and charms of novelty for him. He was surprised at the animation and bustle that the streets presented—he was in raptures with the magnificent buildings that rose upon his view from every side. Wealth and indigence continually jostled one another in the street. Here were indications of the most abject distress—there were vice and iniquity in all their various shapes. Extremes of every description appeared to be blended together, and the aggregate, nevertheless, formed a strange, harmonious whole. Whatever he had hitherto seen had been in a comparative degree; here everything was in its largest extent—wealth, luxury, poverty, misery, crime.

He had been about a fortnight in London, when a circumstance of a peculiar description occurred to him. He had walked out one evening, about ten o'clock, partly with the view of seeing the streets by night. After he had wandered along some of the main thoroughfares, he crossed over Waterloo-bridge, and walked through one or two of the streets on the Surrey side of the water. The night was thick and heavy, and a few drops of rain began to fall, which reminded him it was time to return to his lodgings. He had got about half-way over the bridge, and there stood for a while, looking over the parapet at the various lights all along the river, and at the black stream boiling and bubbling below him, and which was rushing along with amazing rapidity. He had not stood here more than a couple of minutes, when he saw a female figure a short distance from him hastily ascend the parapet, and ere he had time to reach her, plunge herself into the vast stream of water that was flowing beneath. He was horrified at what he had been a witness to. Without the loss, however, of a moment's time, he gave the alarm, and, after a few minutes had elapsed, he was overjoyed to find that the young woman had been found, and placed in a boat; but whether she was dead or alive he was as yet ignorant.

For some time he waited, with the greatest anxiety, till the boat containing the body of the unfortunate woman had reached the shore. When this was accomplished, however, it could not be ascertained whether or not the vital spark had already fled. Merton directed her to be taken to a neighbouring house, and he informed the men, by whose

means she had been saved, that he would see that everything was done that the peculiar situation of the young woman required. A surgeon was immediately summoned to her assistance, and who tried all the restoratives used on such occasions; at first with little hope of success; but he was at length gratified to find his patient manifest symptoms of returning vitality. He continued his exertions, and at last the young woman seemed in a fair way of recovery. It was scarcely possible to form an opinion as to her personal appearance in her present situation. Her clothes appeared to be good without being tawdry. Her features were small, regular, and elegant, and her hands particularly delicate and well-shaped.

Merton gave instructions to the person who kept the house that she should provide her with everything that was necessary, and engage a person, for a short while, to remain constantly with her, and that any expense that might be incurred should be defrayed by himself. Having paid the surgeon for his attendance, he departed, promising to return on the following day.

Agreeably to his promise, he called at the house on the following morning, and was glad to hear that the young woman was rapidly recovering, and that in the course of a day or two she would be able to leave the room. He continued daily to make inquiries respecting her health, and when she had so far recovered as to be able to leave her apartment, she desired to have an interview with Merton, and to know to whom she had been indebted for so much solicitude and kindness.

It was not Merton's intention to leave the matter here. He suspected that the young woman, whose life, partly through his instrumentality, had been saved, was one of those unfortunate creatures without money, without home, without friends. If she were so, he would endeavour to lead her into a better path of life, and so provide for her present exigencies, that she should be able to wait till she heard of a situation likely to suit her. The interview she sought, he, therefore, granted with pleasure.

When he was ushered into her presence, he was surprised at the change a few days had effected in her appearance. Her dress was exceedingly neat and plain. She wore a muslin dress of a dark pattern, her hair was arranged with the greatest elegance, and fell in clustering ringlets upon her shoulders. A small silk neckerchief was tied loosely round her neck. Her complexion was clear and bright, her nose and mouth chiselled after the purest Greek models, and her forehead high and broad. The features, indeed, were as beautiful as any that Merton had ever seen, and the expression of her countenance, though somewhat shaded by misfortune, was insinuating and intelligent. There was nothing vulgar in her appearance, and her manners bespoke the breeding and education of a lady.

"It is to you, sir," she said, advancing to meet him as he entered the room, "that I am indebted for all the kindness and attention I have received since my recent misfortune."

"Whatever has been done for you at my instigation, is only what the heart of a Christian and a gentleman would have prompted."

"That, indeed, is true; but there are so few that we meet with in this stony-hearted city that are actuated by these feelings."

"I assure you," said Merton, "that no act of my previous life has

afforded me so much gratification as that by which I was, in some degree, made the instrument of saving the life of one so young, so interesting, and so——"

He was about to add another word, but he checked himself.

"I know what you would say, sir;" and the tears streamed down her face as she spoke.

"I did not, indeed, intend to wound your feelings," said Merton. "Let the past, however, be forgotten; look forward with cheerfulness and hope to the future."

"My heart, sir, for a long time has not been visited by a single ray of hope. I have hoped and hoped for years, and have always been deceived. Can I trust to hope again? Can I suffer myself to undergo, over and over again, the same course of self-deception? Hope is not for me. It is for the young, the innocent, the happy."

"Why not for you?—you are young, and may be happy."

"Oh, Heavens! no. Youth means innocence—joy;—no, sir, I am not young."

"Trust to God: trust to the softening influence of time, which gradually heals the wounds that misfortune has caused; and though the scar be still there, it serves to remind us of our trials and afflictions, and of our dependence upon a higher power than man."

"I know not what answer to make you. I admit your advice is given with a good intention—I admit in certain cases it might be salutary—but to one already so deeply plunged in sin, whose position is so hopeless, of what avail can it be?"

"I do not think your position so hopeless as you do yourself. Would you consent to be placed in another position in life?"

"Willingly. I would rather seek death again than return to the life I have led for the last few months."

"I will seek out lodgings for you in some retired spot for a week or two, till something can be devised which shall be the means of leading you into a different course of life."

"It is difficult, sir, for me to express my gratitude for the kindness I have already received at your hands; but this fresh evidence of your generosity quite overpowers me, and I cannot find language to express to you the deep sense of my obligations."

"The best reward that we receive for offices of kindness bestowed upon others, is the feeling of joy that springs up in our own breast when we reflect that we have been the means of alleviating the misfortunes of the friendless and unhappy."

"I am sure that a person who is endowed with such noble sentiments would make allowance for the temptations that are sometimes thrown in the way of youth and inexperience. I am not so vile nor so depraved, perhaps, as you think me; and if you will permit me to furnish you with an account of my previous history, you will admit, I think, that my misfortunes are deserving of your sympathy."

"I shall be glad, indeed, to be made acquainted with it. In the mean time, you will, perhaps, favour me with your name."

She hesitated at first, but at length she replied:

"Laura Morton."

"To-morrow I shall call again, when I hope to be able to remove you from this place. Good morning."

XXVII.

THE NARRATIVE OF LAURA MORTON.

MERTON obtained suitable apartments in the neighbourhood of Islington, to which Miss Morton was removed. A few days after her removal, he received from her the following written narrative of her life:

I was born in the county of Somerset. My mother was the daughter of an eminent surgeon. My father was equally well connected on his own side, and was a clergyman of the Church of England; he had a moderate living at ——, which yielded an income quite suitable for the respectable maintenance of his family. I was the only child my parents had.

At a very early period in life I was rendered unhappy. I should be about five years of age, I think, when I became conscious of the misery my poor mother endured, and of the wicked and disgusting proceedings of my father. Although a clergyman and a popular preacher, he was addicted to a vice of so heinous a character that I feel ashamed to confess it to you. He was a drunkard—a confirmed drunkard; and I might almost say with safety, that I never knew him to go to bed sober. It was not, however, for a long time known that he was addicted to drink; for when he was in that state he generally remained in the house, and if anybody called to see him some excuse was made, and an interview was always refused. Thus the matter was kept secret, and though it was long suspected before it became generally known, it appeared to have produced no evil impression amongst his parishioners. He was just as much respected as he had been before, and people were equally as anxious to hear him preach. My father had won their esteem, for he was not only an excellent preacher, but he was also a charitable man, and had always been in the habit of distributing alms freely amongst the poor. Therefore, having established a character amongst them, it was not easy to make his parishioners believe anything to his prejudice.

Matters continued to go on in this way for a long time, without any particular alteration taking place in our domestic arrangements. At length my mother, whose spirit was broken by the continued ill-usage she received from my father, gave way to the temptations by which she was beset, and sought relief and temporary forgetfulness in intoxicating liquors. I remember perfectly the occasion when I first became acquainted with this dreadful intelligence. I was not more than six years of age at the time, but the discovery made so painful an impression upon my mind that it is now as vivid as it was at the time of its occurrence. Oh! it was a fearful hour when the awful truth broke upon my mind. The governess and I had been together in the garden during the whole of the afternoon, but when we returned to the house I asked for mamma. The servants, I fancied, were annoyed at my question, and appeared desirous of evading it. I, however, repeated it; and at length they told me that mamma was unwell in bed, and had desired that she should not be disturbed. I wished, however, particularly to see her, and was running to her room, when one of them caught hold of me, and told me to remain where I was. I refused to do so; and when they attempted to prevent me from going to mamma's room, I screamed as loud as I

could, and, indeed, almost alarmed the neighbourhood. Finding it was useless to attempt to restrain me, one of the girls took me by the hand and conducted me to my mother's chamber. I shall never forget the scene of which I was made a witness. I remember, young as I was, I shuddered at the disgusting spectacle that was presented to me. It is not easy to describe the feelings which agitated me. Fancy a child of six years of age, accustomed to every indulgence—tenderly watched over by both parents with the most earnest solicitude,—fancy her trained up in the most exemplary way—precepts of the most salutary description instilled into her mind by those to whom her education was entrusted,—fancy her parents moving in the higher circles of society, and possessed of the manners and accomplishments which education and good-breeding are supposed to confer,—fancy this, I say, and conceive my surprise and anguish when, on entering the room, I beheld my mother writhing about on the floor in all the delirium of intoxication! The servants had placed her on the bed several times, but she would not remain there. Oh, God! that cursed—cursed drink. I thought it was the bane to all earthly happiness. I thought it was the old serpent that had beguiled our first mother, and that the fiend was still loose upon the world to work more destruction, and to heap more misery upon mankind. I shrank with loathing from the sight—I crouched behind the servants as though I were afraid. I had seen enough. I wished to be away. The atmosphere appeared polluted—the very floor seemed to be tainted by corruption. I had seen my father frequently before in this state, but I had grown accustomed to it; and however harsh and imperious he may have been towards my mother, to me, at least, he had always been uniformly kind and affectionate. When he, therefore, was in a state of intoxication, the circumstance excited in me neither surprise nor apprehension. Here the case was different. I now beheld her whom I had always regarded with every feeling of affection—her to whom I had been accustomed to pay every respect—her who had caressed me a thousand times, and loaded me with countless marks of her affection,—I beheld her whom I had been accustomed to consider as something more than woman—debased, degraded; degraded in the eyes of her daughter, a child; degraded in the eyes of her servants; degraded in the eyes of her husband, who in his sober moments was still able to appreciate her, and to bear testimony to her character and worth. Oh! what a revulsion of feeling did this produce! Could I love and esteem my mother again? Could I listen to her counsels and admonitions as if they were intended for my benefit? Could I take that pleasure in her society which I had once done? It was impossible. Young and inexperienced as I was, I felt that my mother had degraded herself to a level with the beasts. I felt that she had degraded her family, and that henceforth she had forfeited the respect of every person that knew her.

Whilst she was in this state, my father, who had been visiting and praying with one of his sick parishioners, returned home. He inquired for my mother, and was informed that she was in her chamber. He went up to her, and found her in the state I have described. When he returned to the sitting-room where I was, he took me upon his knee and kissed me a thousand times, and the tears flowed copiously down his cheeks. He was aware of his own irregularity, and when he was sober

his reflections were often painful and almost unbearable; but now his misery was increased a hundred-fold when he found that my mother was also addicted to drink, and that she had become so in all probability by the example which he himself had set her, and by the cruel treatment that she received at his hands. That night foreshadowed the ruin and misery that was to befal our family; it foreshadowed the friendless outcasts, the premature grave; it foreshadowed the deserted orphan, the wretched prostitute, the unhappy creature that attempted to increase her guilt and terminate her sufferings by an act of suicide. I say that night was but the prelude to greater misery—greater degradation. My father could not bear to think upon my mother's deplorable situation. He had recourse to his usual remedy for painful reflections.

A bottle of spirits, by his directions, was placed upon the table, and he drank till he had rendered himself quite oblivious of the circumstances which had but a short while before so greatly depressed him. I sat with him in the room whilst he poured glass after glass into his mouth. He asked me, for the first time in his life, to taste with him, but at first I resolutely refused. He pressed me again, and I consented to take two spoonfuls. It was well sweetened with sugar, and much more pleasant to drink than I expected. I watched my father closely as he sat in front of the fire, drinking his hot spirit and water in a way which bespoke the pleasure it was affording him. I was a good deal struck with the change in his countenance and manner after he had drunk the first glass. His countenance before had been grave and sad, his manner peevish and restless. A more animated and cheerful expression overspread his face, and he began to lose that ascerbity of temper which I had previously remarked. Although but a child, these things made a deep impression upon my mind. It had always been a mystery to me why people should be addicted to strong liquors, since it entailed so much misery upon themselves and families, and deprived them, whilst under their influence, of reason and the use of their faculties. I remember one day putting a question to mamma upon the subject.

"Mamma," I said, "why is papa so fond of brandy when it does him so much harm, and causes him, when he is sober, so many regrets?"

"It would be difficult, my child, to answer you that question. It is a species of infatuation—madness, I think, that causes him to indulge in it to so great an excess."

"I am sure, mamma, if it threw me into such a state I would never taste the nasty stuff again."

"I am glad, my dear, to hear you express so much aversion to it, and I trust you will always keep in the same mind."

To return, however, to my father. When he had drunk the second glass, I could perceive that he had gradually acquired an exuberance of spirits, that his countenance became each moment more cheerful, and that his eyes, which before had been dull and heavy, became bright and quick in their movements. The truth flashed across my mind. It was the liquor—the brandy—that was working this beneficial effect. It was not deleterious, it was not poisonous; it was salutary in its influence, and capable of chasing sorrow and misery from the heart. The mystery was solved, the secret revealed. It was not altogether the love of spirituous liquors that induced men to drink them in such copious quantities.

There was another cause, a powerful cause. It was poverty, wretchedness, guilt. It was a painful discovery, a fearful revelation. The conduct of my dear mother was more excusable than I had at first imagined. She had had recourse to brandy to drown her cares—alleviate the grief that was perpetually gnawing at her heart. Oh! that she could have withstood the temptation! Oh! that she had possessed the fortitude to resist the encroachments of vice, which, gradually increased by indulgence, gains day by day fresh force, till at length both body and soul of its helpless victim are completely within its grasp!

My father continued to drink the brandy till he fell into a state of the most abject intoxication, and as the servants did not like to make an attempt to remove him to his chamber, he was sufferd to lie upon the floor of the room till he had become sober. I was taken to bed. I wept bitterly at what I had seen—I wept bitterly at the thought of not being able to bid mamma good night as I had been accustomed to do.

I will not say how much my dear mother, on the next day, was ashamed of herself, for the grievous indiscretion of which she had been guilty. She shut herself up in her room, and refused to take any food or see anybody. I was most anxious to be taken to her, and after some persuasion, I prevailed upon one of the servants to carry me to her chamber. When I entered, I was bashful, and a good deal annoyed. My mother was pale, and seemed wretched and unhappy; she hung down her head as though she were afraid to encounter my scrutinising gaze. I had not been long here, when my father, to whom entrance before had been refused, abruptly came in.

"Good morning, madam," he said; "I hope you have recovered from your indisposition."

"I am better, sir, thank you," my mother replied; and the tears began to course down her cheeks.

"I am glad to hear it. I trust you will not be attacked again with so serious a malady."

"I shall endeavour, Charles, to guard myself against it in future."

"The example you have set our child and the servants is disgraceful. I can't understand how you can ever hope to exercise any control over them in future."

"What you say is very true, but it appears to me that I am not the only guilty person."

"Zounds! madam, if I choose to go to destruction, there is no reason why you should do so. You are expected to be a pattern to your household, instead of which you have placed yourself upon a level with the meanest prostitute that walks the streets. What will the servants—what will the neighbours think of such conduct, for you may depend upon it it will not be kept a secret?"

My mother was silent, and covered her face with her handkerchief.

"If you have no respect for yourself, at least have some respect for your family—for your connexions—for your position in life. Your conduct has been infamous—disgraceful."

And with these words my father left the room, violently slamming the door after him.

At this part, Merton deferred the further perusal of the MS. till some future occasion.

XXVIII.

THE MISER IN BONDAGE.

It is now time to return to the scene where this narrative opened. When the intelligence was spread about Morlington that old Horncastle, whose pauper-like appearance had created a great deal of ridicule and curiosity, had become the proprietor of the Old Hall, and the estate which had previously belonged to the Mortimers, it is difficult to convey an idea of the sensation it produced. An impression had long prevailed in the neighbourhood that Horncastle was not so poor as he appeared to be, but no idea for a moment had been entertained that he possessed sufficient money to purchase the estate in question. The inquiry that then arose was—Who was this Horncastle? what had he been? how had he accumulated his money? His history appeared, however, to be involved in the deepest mystery, and nobody was able to obtain the least tidings respecting him. During his stay at Mrs. Wallford's, he had mixed little amongst the people of the town, and when by chance he was thrown into their society, his manners were so disagreeable, his observations so acrimonious, that he had excited the strongest prejudice in their minds towards him. He had come amongst them as a stranger, and appeared to have no previous knowledge of the inhabitants, and yet the town and neighbourhood seemed familiar to him. There was another matter which was scarcely less curious. He had purchased the Old Hall —a place which had always been held to be under the ban of Heaven— whose rooms were polluted by acts of violence, and regarding which a dark and impenetrable mystery prevailed. Of what use was a house of this description to an old man, without friends or relations? The character of the place was known to Horncastle, and most of persons would have thought that that would have deterred him from becoming its purchaser.

It was, therefore, difficult to say what was really his object. It had been generally anticipated that before he entered the house sundry repairs and alterations would have been made, in order to make the place inhabitable. The consequence of this anticipation was, that many persons made applications to Horncastle for employment, but received in every case a refusal.

When it was at last discovered that he did not mean to be at any expense in putting it into repair, the surprise of everybody was unbounded. As the time for his entering upon the mansion approached, a great deal of anxiety became manifest, for it was expected that the nocturnal disturbances to which the place was liable would put his courage to the severest test, and probably in the end cause him to abandon the house as a place of residence.

The incident which befel him on the first night of his residence at the Hall has been already described. The condition in which he was left by Lindenberg had not only rendered him incapable of giving an alarm and causing a pursuit, but had prevented him from affording himself the least assistance. The wretched old man lay stretched upon the floor of the damp and gloomy vault, bound hand and foot—cut off from all assistance from without, and left apparently to perish by hunger. It is impossible to conceive a situation more desolate and more terrible. A rushlight—

whose wick had grown to an immense length—was fastened to the wall, and the strong iron-box, despoiled of most of its treasures, stood open upon the floor. The damp was oozing through the ceiling and trickling down the walls, and imparting to the place a more cheerless and comfortless aspect than can be easily conceived.

Without, a storm was raging with the greatest vehemence. The wind violently shook the worn-out casements of the windows—howled amongst the dilapidated chimneys, and swept through the long corridors with an angry and a bitter tone. The old man wept. He wept at his helplessness—his loneliness. He wept at the dreadful fate which appeared to await him. Man—the elements—everything was leagued against him. Why was he so friendless and so unhappy? There was none to share his griefs—to sympathise with his misfortunes; there was none to smooth his pillow when cares and anxieties distracted him. There was none to minister to his comfort, or to afford him consolation, when his heart was oppressed; and there was none to share his joys. Wretched—wretched man! He had allowed his heart to be absorbed by one object to the exclusion of all others. He had made money his idol, and had despised those nobler pursuits which aspire to something higher. Of what use were his possessions now—his well-filled coffers—his broad lands—his various investments—his consols—his bonds? Could all the gold of Peru enable him to effect his liberty, or to reach a crust to prevent him from starving? He was once more in the jaws of death, with as little hope of escape as before.

The long and tedious hours passed away, and still the storm raged with undiminished violence. The old man thought it would never be day—he longed for the light to illuminate his prison. He was tired of keeping his eyes continually fixed upon the sickly candle that was burning, and which tended to show the place in the most unfavourable light. Darkness was preferable to the lurid gleam it threw around. The least noise that he heard led him to believe that Lindenberg had reflected upon the awful position in which he had left him, and had taken compassion upon him, and resolved to set him free. But the noise died away, and save the tumult caused by the wind and the rain, all was still.

The weary, weary night at length came to an end, and the light of day again beamed into the gloomy chamber. The return of day brought no hope. His heart was filled with despair. The day passed away, and the night again approached, and he still lay upon the ground, wretched and helpless. His hunger became every moment more unbearable, but there was no hope of his being able to appease it.

When the darkness had set in, his spirits were unusually depressed. He began to reflect upon the isolated character of the house—he began to reflect upon Lindenberg and the lawless band of men that were under his command. Lindenberg's character was now fully revealed to him. He had always thought him a bad man, but he had never conceived him to be so wicked and so depraved as he really was. Was it not probable that Lindenberg would return? Was it not likely that, upon second thoughts, he would resolve upon finishing the work he had begun. His character was cruel, lawless, violent. When his own safety was at stake, he cared not what crime he committed to secure it. It might occur to him after his departure, that Horncastle would by some means recover his liberty, and sooner

or later cause his apprehension and conviction. What was to prevent his imposing the most impenetrable silence upon Horncastle for ever? In a word, why should he not become a murderer, since so long as he was alive his liberty would be in continual danger? Circumstances were most favourable for the perpetration of such a crime. The house was lonely and unprotected; Horncastle old and infirm, and incapable of making any resistance. These were the thoughts that haunted the mind of the wretched man as he lay in expectation of either closing his life by the hand of an assassin, or perishing by hunger.

XXIX.

LAURA MORTON'S NARRATIVE CONCLUDED.

MERTON felt so deeply interested in the history of Laura Morton, that he took an early opportunity of again sitting down to the perusal of her painful and curious narrative, which thus proceeded:

For several weeks my mother refrained from the use of all intoxicating liquors; and, indeed, evidently determined never again to be guilty of such an offence against propriety as that to which I have already adverted. My father observed with pleasure the exertions she was making to guard against temptation. In order that the work of reformation might be based upon good grounds and bring forth fruit in abundance, it might naturally have been expected that a change in his conduct would have been observable, and that he would have endeavoured to strengthen the determination that my mother had come to. It was not so. He continued to drink as hard as ever, and to cause as much misery and dissension in the family as he had hitherto done. The unhappiness of my mother at length became so great that she suffered herself again to commit the fault which had been so severely censured by my father, and which had placed her in so unenviable a light amongst the servants. Again was she reproved—again did she inwardly resolve upon a thorough reformation. It was in vain. She had yielded once—twice. What hope was there for reformation? *Il n'y a que la première peine qui coute.* The resolution was broken like the former. The occasional indulgence in the use of ardent spirits became habitual, and my mother a confirmed drunkard. If discontent and misery had already prevailed in our family, it was now increased tenfold. An impetus was added to my father's propensities in consequence of the habits that my mother had contracted. From this point in our history, the decline of the family was rapid and fatal.

I have before said that the dissipated character of my father was for a long time concealed from his parishioners; and though there were a few who were aware of it, yet in consideration of his ability as a preacher and his kindness to the poor, it was overlooked. These habits, however, at length began to interfere with the proper discharge of his clerical duties. Sometimes he would enter the pulpit when he was under the influence of drink—sometimes he would officiate at a funeral or a wedding when he was not in a proper state for reading the service—sometimes he would attend a death-bed and offer up a prayer to Almighty God for the salva-

tion of the soul of a dying parishioner, when he should have been at home in his own closet calling upon the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh to pardon his own sins and to infuse into his heart a spirit of penitence and reformation. Discontent at length began to manifest itself in the parish—the people as he passed along the street no longer paid him that respect which they had been accustomed to do—his congregation every Sunday became thinner and thinner, and the scenes that were daily enacted in his house formed the chief topic of conversation in the town. My father commenced to put less restraint upon his actions than ordinary, and he was frequently seen in a state of intoxication in the open streets; the result of this kind of conduct may be anticipated. The bishop deprived him of his gown. My father appointed a parson to discharge his duties, and we removed to Taunton, where he commenced a school. From his living he derived about 50*l.* per annum; and this, joined to what he could make by teaching, was all that we had to depend upon. If my father had been steady he need not have despaired of making an excellent livelihood by his exertions, for he was one of the best classics in the county, and had been first and second year's prizeman at Cambridge. Instead, however, of improving, he daily grew worse. He lost all kind of self-respect, and his dirty and slovenly appearance, when he went abroad, began to excite the contempt and commiseration of those that knew him.

My mother continued in the same course, and rarely a day passed away without one or both of them being in a state of intoxication. Although my father and mother were addicted to such pernicious habits, I was not neglected, although there was, perhaps, not that attention paid to me which there would have been under other circumstances. My mother, who was a most accomplished woman, chiefly superintended my education, and if I possess any superiority over the class of unfortunate females with which I have associated, it is to be ascribed to her.

Years passed away without any change worthy of recording taking place. It was scarcely possible to be reduced to greater extremities than we were sometimes; and I have known a day pass over without food of any kind being in the house. On occasions of the kind I usually had recourse to a friendly neighbour, who supplied me with what I required. When I was yet quite young, my mother died, and I was, therefore, entrusted with the management of my father's household concerns. The death of my mother produced no great impression upon his mind. He was a little cast down for a few days after the event took place, but he speedily recovered.

It had been proposed, long before my mother's death, that I should go and reside with an uncle and aunt some distance off, but my parents would not consent to my removal, and as I felt no disposition to do so myself, the matter was suffered to rest there. My relatives were, of course, afraid that I should be contaminated by the vice that disfigured the characters of my parents, and this was the motive that urged them to seek my removal. On the death of my mother, the proposition was again made, but both my father and self were opposed to it. I therefore continued at home. The truth is, I had no wish to leave my father. He was strongly attached to me; and although he was so intemperate in his habits, I never experienced any harsh treatment from

him. When he suspected (which he sometimes did) that I wished to leave him, I have seen him fall down upon his knees at my feet—implore my forgiveness for all the misery he had entailed upon my mother and myself—and beg me not to desert him, but to remain with him till he died. On these occasions the tears would roll down his cheeks, and he would never rise from his position till he had obtained my consent, which I readily granted, for nothing was further from my wish than to leave him after my mother's death.

There are few girls, I believe, who are considered pretty or good-looking, who do not at a very early age become conscious of it. I remember that, as a child, I was thought to be remarkably handsome; and during our prosperity I was a good deal noticed by the persons who visited at our house. My beauty did not leave me as I advanced in years; and when I was thirteen years of age I had a number of admirers. I was, perhaps, somewhat like other girls who are so fortunate or unfortunate, as the case may be, to possess great personal attractions. I was a little vain and romantic. When I was sixteen, there were several young men who professed a great deal of affection for me, and if I had been sensible, I might have chosen an excellent husband from amongst them. I conceived that I ought to aspire to a higher station in life than any they could place me in.

It was about this time, and whilst I was still living with my father, that a circumstance took place which was destined to embitter every moment of my subsequent existence, and to lead me step by step to destruction. I happened to be at church one Sunday morning, when a gentleman entered the pew in which I was sitting—it was a large square pew, with seats all around it. He seated himself opposite to me, and during the whole of the service, when my eyes, as he thought, were fixed upon the book, his glance was directed towards me. I was somewhat annoyed, but, nevertheless, pleased that my personal appearance should have been capable of exciting his admiration. He was a young man—not more, I should say, than three-and-twenty. He was tall and well made, and dressed with considerable taste. His features were manly and regular, and his eyes the finest I had ever seen—they were of a dark hazel colour, and fringed with long black eyelashes. Upon his upper lip he wore a moustache, which was arranged in a graceful curl, and imparted a military air to his appearance. If he was fascinated by my beauty, I was no less so with his. I thought—and, indeed, still think, him the handsomest man I ever saw.

When the service was over, he followed me closely out of church. Fearing that he might wish to know where I lived and follow me home, I determined not to proceed in that direction, for I should have been ashamed if he had seen me enter the poor, mean-looking cottage in which we lived. Would to Heaven I had never been ashamed of a place sacred to the best affections—a place in which, at least, some happy moments of my life were spent, and where, notwithstanding the evil example that was set me, and the temptations which were thrown in my way, I was still innocent, and addicted to no vicious habits!

It was by these means that my admirer was unable to discover my place of residence; after he had walked behind me for a considerable distance, he gave the matter up in despair. I need not say that on the

Sunday following I was again at church. The gentleman was in the pew when I arrived; we exchanged looks of recognition, but nothing further took place. When the service was concluded, he followed, as usual, closely behind me. It happened to be raining a little, and I, unfortunately, had no umbrella with me. The opportunity which thus presented itself was not lost sight of. My admirer happened to be provided with an umbrella, and he kindly came forward and asked me if I would avail myself of it. I could not refuse, nor was I, indeed, inclined to do so. He offered me his arm, which I accepted; and being still anxious to keep him in the dark as to my real place of residence, I resolved upon calling at the house of a friend. As we walked along together, the conversation took an ordinary turn. We spoke of the weather—the sermon, and so forth. I was a good deal charmed with his manner and conversation, and felt sure that his education and breeding were those of a gentleman. When we reached the house I intended to call at, I thanked him for his kindness, and we parted. As I bade him good morning, he slightly pressed my hand, and I plainly read in his eyes an invitation to meet him again.

My thoughts during the whole of the ensuing week were occupied with my new admirer. Who was he? What was his profession? To what place did he belong? Such were the questions which arose to my mind as I pondered over the subject. The gentleman evidently was not a permanent resident of the place, for I did not remember to have seen him before, and many persons whom I spoke to upon the subject had no knowledge of him whatever.

It happened one evening I had strolled a little way from the town. It was in the autumn, and the weather was beautiful. The parting rays of the sun were shedding their rich golden light upon the beautiful landscape which lay stretched before me. Here I beheld a field containing innumerable cocks of new-mown hay, which wafted a perfume more grateful to the smell than the richest garland; there a corn-field presented itself filled with golden sheaves piled one upon another; a little farther, I could perceive a mill by the side of a clear stream of water, whose murmuring sounds as it wended along over its rocky bed, fell like softest music upon the ear. The foliage of the trees were beginning to assume that yellow tint which is common to this season of the year. I was wandering on and admiring the scene before me, and a good deal absorbed in thought, when suddenly the gentleman I have before spoken of turned an angle of the road, and came rapidly towards me. He smiled when he had reached me, and extending his hand to me, asked me how I was.

"I suppose the fineness of the evening has tempted you to walk," he shortly afterwards added.

I replied that it had.

"It is not late, Miss Morton," he pursued; "if you will permit me, I will turn and accompany you."

I was surprised to find that he was acquainted with my name.

"I should be sorry to detain you; probably you have an engagement elsewhere."

"No, indeed I have not; and even if I had, I should be much inclined to break it for the sake of your society."

"I find you abound in compliments."

"But tell me, pray, how you became acquainted with my name."

"I know several persons who are acquainted with you."

It would be useless to dwell upon this painful part of my history. We walked for upwards of an hour together, and before we separated we had exchanged those vows which are supposed to bind people together for life. I ascertained that his name was Brooksbank, that he was the youngest son of a gentleman of large fortune, who resided in a northern county; that his profession was that of a barrister, and that he was at that time on a visit to some friends in Taunton. After this time we met constantly, and scarcely a day passed over without my seeing him. I pressed him frequently to visit my father, but he always refused, but the grounds on which he declined doing so appeared to me to be reasonable enough.

As the time for his departure from Taunton drew near, I expected he would propose an arrangement for our future correspondence, but, to my surprise, he never alluded to it. Two days, however, before our separation was to take place, he began to speak of it in a way which plainly indicated how much grieved he should be to part from me, even though it was but for a short time. He also wished that some plan could be adopted which should obviate the necessity of our separation at all. There was no way, however, by which that could be affected unless he would consent to marry me, and which, as he had never alluded to the subject, I conceived he was not at that time in a position to do. Our spirits were greatly depressed when we separated, and as our next interview was to be the last, Mr. Brooksbank requested me, before we met again, to devise some plan whereby we might be spared the pain of a separation.

When I met him on the following evening, the first question he put to me was—

"Well, my dear Laura, I hope your brain has been prolific, and that you have hit upon a scheme which shall prevent this night's interview being our last—at least for some time."

"Nay, I should have thought that yours would have been more likely to discover such a stratagem than mine."

"I have certainly thought of the subject," said Brooksbank, "and a plan has suggested itself to me, but I know not whether it may meet your approval."

"What do you propose?"

"Will you consent to accompany me to London, and as soon as I have made arrangements I will marry you?"

I looked sternly in his face. My eyes met his. I thought I could detect the tempter in his look and manner. I fancied I caught a glimpse of the rake—the man of fashion—the delight of the elegant circles of society—the man who lounges away his hour at his club—or at a ball or a theatre, with an assurance and self-complacency that is sufficient to startle one—the man who is so sensitive of his honour that if it were in the least degree impugned, he would hazard his life in its defence,—I say, I fancied I beheld this man, who, in addition to what I have attributed to him, would deem it an evidence of skill, of tact, of triumph, to ruin an innocent girl, and plunge her and her family for the rest of their lives into the deepest anguish and despair! Men of honour! Oh, Heavens! how they have belied the name! If there be any class of individuals

capable of judging of men of this description, it is surely that with which I have lately been associated. Before them they stand stripped of their titles—their stations—their wealth—their breeding—their education. Their hearts are bared before them, and vile and sinful they are frequently found to be!

I looked at Brooksbank, and replied:

"And leave my father? Never."

"My dearest Laura, it will be but for a time. You will return again to him a happy wife, and crave his blessing."

"No, Brooksbank—no, this may not be."

"Why not, Laura? Have I not offered you everything that you desire—have I not consented to make you my wife as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made? What more can you expect?"

"It would be imprudent to leave my father before we were married."

"This is sheer nonsense, dearest Laura. It is but a day or two at most that will elapse before we are married."

I had listened to the tempter, and the result may be anticipated. Without apprising anybody of my intention, I agreed to accompany him to London. I wrote a note afterwards to my poor father, in which I exculpated myself as well as I could for the rash act which I had committed; and whilst I deprecated his anger, I intimated that not many days would elapse before I should return to him the wife of a gentleman of fortune and education. I never saw him again. My sudden flight, coupled with his intemperate habits, brought on an illness of the most aggravating kind, which terminated his existence in the course of a few weeks.

On our arrival in London, Mr. Brooksbank took lodgings in a fashionable street at the West-end, and where I passed as his wife. I had not been long with him before I began to suspect that I had been deceived. During the first few days I constantly urged him to do me justice, and to fulfil the promise that he had made; but he had always some pretext for postponing the performance of the ceremony. At one time he pleaded pressing business engagements; at another, that he was only awaiting a remittance from an aunt of his in Wales, which, when he had received, he would at once purchase the licence and take immediate steps for the celebration of our marriage. He was uniformly kind and attentive, and there was nothing that I required which he did not immediately obtain. We visited together almost every place of amusement. I remember one night, when we were at the Haymarket, being particularly affected by a circumstance that occurred. It was only about a fortnight after my arrival in London. Brooksbank and I were sitting in one of the upper tiers of boxes, and immediately opposite to the unfortunate girls with whom I too soon formed an acquaintance. During the whole of the performance the glances of two or three of these girls were perpetually directed towards us; and whilst they frequently talked and laughed together, it appeared to me that we were the subject of their conversation, and the occasion of their laughter. The girls evidently knew Brooksbank, and when we returned home I said:

"Brooksbank, who were those girls that sat opposite to us?"

"What girls do you mean, dearest?"

"Those impudent-looking girls so gaily dressed."

"I do not know, indeed. They are girls of the town, I believe."

"They appeared to know you."

"Oh! I assure you they claim acquaintance with everybody—they are by no means diffident in that respect."

I was not quite satisfied with Brooksbank's reply, and the circumstance added additional weight to my former suspicions.

Weeks passed away, and I continued to live with Mr. Brooksbank as his mistress, although I was constantly pressing him to fulfil the promise he had made me. I found, however, at length that my impatience annoyed him, and caused him to become irritable and peevish, and was obliged to desist. He alleged as his excuse for not performing his promise that various obstacles had intervened, which he had not calculated upon, and which would unavoidably cause its fulfilment to be deferred for some little time. My eyes were opened. I appreciated his motives for this procrastination. I saw through his hollow and selfish purposes—he was a villain—his base heart lay bared before me. Oh, God! was it for this man—this coxcomb—this personification of selfishness and wickedness that I had fled from home—broken the heart of my father—sacrificed honour, station, self-respect, and plunged as it were headlong into the very vortex of destruction? For whom had I made these sacrifices? For whom had I so diverged from the paths of honour and virtue? It was not a man that had instigated me to this fatal step—no, thank Heaven! the name is allied to nobler attributes—it was a monster—a devil!

There were moments at this period of my life which were almost unbearable; for when he was not with me (I am sorry to say I still had some regard for him) I became a prey to my own thoughts. I could not drive them away, although I strove with all my power to do so. They reminded me constantly of my former position—surrounded by friends, beloved by an affectionate father, and with reasonable prospects before me. From the past, I glanced at the present. Heavens! what a contrast! A wretched, dishonoured creature—without home, without friends, without station—dependent upon the bounty of one whom I despised, and who I anticipated ere long would cast me aside for another whom he deemed more worthy of his attentions. I bethought me of a remedy to banish these thoughts from my mind. I thought of my father and mother, and determined to have recourse to their solace. We had always an excellent supply of both wine and brandy in the house, but I had hitherto been very temperate in my habits, and had rarely taken more than one glass of wine at a time. I required something stronger; I required something to rid me of the agonising thoughts that perpetually haunted my mind and rendered existence unbearable. I drank freely of the brandy, and the copious draughts in which I had indulged rendered me insensible for a time to the grief that oppressed me. Formerly I had cursed intoxicating liquors, and had expressed the greatest horror for them; but now they were my only relief, my only consolation. They dispelled thought, and that was everything. I was comparatively happy and cheerful when under their influence, and could laugh and rejoice with the gayest. I never drank, however, to a great excess; I merely took sufficient for my purpose. Brooksbank was not long in discovering my propensities, and he was not so sorry as I expected he would have been. About this time, however, I was favoured

with less of his company, and my presence was evidently not so desirable as it once had been. The change did not affect me much; I saw through his designs. I saw that he only waited for a favourable opportunity to cast me off entirely.

We had now been living together about three months when I received a note from him, apprising me that he had suddenly been called away upon important business, and did not know when he should be back again, and advising me to return to my friends. The note enclosed a Bank of England note for 20*l.*, which he regretted to say was all that he could spare at that moment. When I had read his dastardly letter, I placed the Bank of England note within it, and thrust them both into the fire.

I immediately quitted my present expensive lodgings, and soon obtained others of a humbler description, and which better accorded with my means. For the first few days after our separation I was exceedingly dull and unhappy, and I believe, if it had not been for the relief which brandy afforded me, I should have destroyed myself. I had as yet decided upon no course of action. One thing was evident. It was useless to return home. My father I had ascertained was dead, and I felt assured that my former friends would not recognise me. I thought of endeavouring to find employment as a sempstress, or as a teacher of music, or drawing, or French, for I was fully qualified to give instruction in any of these departments. Innumerable difficulties, however, presented themselves. I was a stranger in London—I knew nobody. Besides, it was not likely that any person would employ me without knowing something of my previous character.

I was very fond of theatrical amusements, and one night my landlady's daughter and I, accompanied by a young man, an acquaintance of the former, went to —— theatre. We went to the pit, and whilst there I again saw two of the very same girls whom I had seen on a former occasion whilst in the company of Brooksbank.

When the performance was over, and whilst we were walking home together, somebody pulled my dress behind, and turning round, I beheld a stout lady very fashionably dressed. She desired, she said, to speak to me for a few minutes, and requesting my friends to walk slowly on, and informing them that I should soon overtake them, I acceded to her request.

"I have a letter for you from Mr. Brooksbank," she said.

"Mr. Brooksbank!" I exclaimed, in surprise.

"Yes," she answered. "If you will call at No. 7, —— street, tomorrow, I will deliver it to you."

"I do not wish to receive any further communications from Mr. Brooksbank," I said, haughtily.

"Oh! but the letter affects your interest deeply."

"I do not care for that," I said; and abruptly left her standing in the street.

On the following day I began to reflect upon the matter, and thinking that something more advantageous might arise from it than I at first expected, I determined to go to the address indicated by the woman. I accordingly did so, and again saw the person whom I had seen on the previous night. I asked for the letter from Mr. Brooksbank, but, after looking about for it for some time, she said that it was mislaid, and that

she could not lay her hands upon it at that moment. After a further search, she asked me if I knew anybody that wanted a situation as a lady's maid. I replied in the negative; but I had scarcely done so than it occurred to me that a situation of that kind would suit myself. I therefore said, that I should have no objection to undertake a situation of that description. Before I parted with her, it was arranged that I should fill the situation, and enter upon it at once.

I hastened to my lodgings, and having packed up my clothes, engaged a man to carry them to my new abode. I informed my landlady that I had obtained a situation, and that I was at once going to enter upon it.

You will already have surmised the nature of the situation I was going to fill, and the description of the person I was going to serve. She was what is called a *procurante;* but I solemnly declare that I had not the least suspicion of this when I entered her service. With respect to the letter from Brooksbank, it was merely a *ruse* to entrap me.

I had not been long here when I ascertained that Brooksbank was then living with another girl. Instead of his profession being that of a barrister, I found that he had a commission in the army, and that his regiment was then absent, and from which he had obtained leave of absence to visit his friends in England. He never returned to it. He was shot in a duel shortly after the time I speak of.

I remained with this woman two or three years, witnessing every scene of dissipation that can present itself in a place familiar with every description of vice. My thoughts at times were unendurable. I thought they would have driven me mad. In such extremities as these I had but one subterfuge—that was brandy. I drank till I had driven away those harrowing reflections.

It was whilst labouring under the greatest depression of spirits, and visited by the acutest reflections, that I attempted self-destruction. My subsequent history is already known to you.

When Merton had finished the perusal of this painful narrative, the pages of which he had frequently bedewed with his tears, he placed it in his trunk, with the intention of returning it to its unhappy writer.

XXX.

THE RELEASE.

LEAVING once more the metropolis, we must return again to Horncastle, whose pitiable situation is already familiar to the reader. When the morning broke, it found him pale and emaciated from cold and hunger. His limbs were so rigid that he could scarcely move them. He was inwardly praying for death to release him from his sufferings. His release, however, was not so far distant as he conceived, for whilst endeavouring to move his arms with a view to impart some warmth to his shivering frame, he fancied that they were not bound so tightly as they had been, and the cord did not appear to bite his arms so severely as before. Hope began to revive in his breast. He moved his arms with as much force as his feeble strength would admit of, and to his joy and astonishment he found they were free. During the night, whilst

asleep, a friendly rat had gnawed the cord in several places, and thus effected his deliverance. It was some time before he was able to rise, and it was only after repeated attempts that he succeeded in doing so.

Having in some degree satisfied his appetite, which was ravenous, he took from a small closet in his room a bottle, containing about half a pint of brandy. He twice filled a small wine-glass with the spirit, and drank it, and a beneficial change in his appearance soon became apparent. He then proceeded to light his fire, and to place the stone over the cavity in the cellar below.

The attack which had nearly proved so fatal to him, determined him to take further precautions for the safety of his money in future. The cavity I have referred to contained another small box besides the one which had been robbed of a large portion of its contents by Lindenberg. Horncastle was thankful that it had escaped, for if Lindenberg had known of its existence he would probably have returned for further booty. For the better security of the money, Horncastle resolved upon putting it in a place where it was exposed to less danger. He had heard, whilst living at the Wallfords', that Mr. Crumbledust was a wealthy man, and that several persons had placed small sums of money in his hands in preference to lodging them with a banker, and that Crumbledust paid them a small interest upon their deposits, which was a little higher than they could obtain at the bank.

When Horncastle had sufficiently recovered, he called upon Mr. Crumbledust to consult him upon this point. When he was shown into his room, he found him busy polishing with a coarse cloth an antique and beautifully-chased cabinet. All the furniture of this room was of the same date, and everything of a modern character had been carefully excluded. The walls of the apartment were of dark wainscot, and it was floored with strong English oak.

"Hollo, Mr. Horncastle, is that you? How do you do, sir?"

"I am tolerably well, thank you."

"And how do you like your new place of residence, sir?"

"The house is well enough for an old man."

"I should think it would be more comfortable, sir, if the roof was in better repair."

"Perhaps so; but it is unnecessary. The room I occupy is comfortable enough. I am satisfied, and that is sufficient."

"Are you an admirer of ancient furniture?" inquired Crumbledust, changing the subject when he found that his visitor appeared displeased with the remark he had made."

"No."

"Modern?"

"No."

"To which do you give the preference, sir?"

"I have no choice in the matter."

"Why, sir, is it possible? No choice in the matter! I'll tell you, sir, what I have lately done, and you shall say whether I did right or not. For some years this room was furnished with furniture of a modern date. I frequently remonstrated with my housekeeper for having purchased the furniture, and told her that when I saw an opportunity I

would have it removed, and put some other in its stead which should be at least 150 years old. Whenever I have succeeded in obtaining an article of that age, I have invariably found it answer my purpose better than anything manufactured at the present day. It must, however, have been made at least 150 years ago. I have sometimes, sir, bought articles fifty or sixty years old, but they never answer, sir—never so well as those I am speaking of. Well, sir, a short while ago a sale of ancient furniture took place. I attended it, and bought as many things as I wanted, and having ordered the furniture which stood here before to be taken away, placed them in this apartment. I do not allow any of the servants to touch them. I clean them and polish them myself. I assure you, sir, it causes me the greatest delight when I cast my eyes round the place. It immediately occurs to me that the articles were manufactured by a superior race of men—that I behold the things that the people of 1710 beheld, and that the furniture which supplied the wants of the people of that period of our history, equally supply the wants of Ephraim Crumbledust in the nineteenth century. This reflection, sir, fills me with pride. I should like, sir, when I walk out, to behold the manufactures of 1710 rather than those of the present day. I declare to you, sir, I have been disgusted a thousand times at the things I have seen exhibited in shop-windows, made in so fantastic a manner, so devoid of all service and comfort, that I have come to the conclusion that men will make any change if it be only for the sake of innovation. No, sir, no: the manners and customs of the people of 1710 are as much superior to those of the present age as light is to darkness."

"Whilst Mr. Crumbledust was giving utterance to these sentiments, Horncastle stood calmly before him with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and paying little attention to what he was saying. As soon as he had finished, he said:

"I understand that you occasionally act as a banker."

"Money, sir, is sometimes placed in my hands for safety," said Crumbledust.

"That's what I mean. I have some money for which I have no immediate use, and I wish to put it where it will be safe."

"There is the bank," suggested Crumbledust.

"The interest is so small."

"There's the funds."

"The amount is not large enough for investment."

"There is some mistake on your part, I think, Mr. Horncastle. You do not understand, sir, the motives that induced me to take charge of the few sums of money that have been placed in my hands by two or three persons in this town. A little mistake on your side, I think, sir, eh?"

"Probably there is."

"I will explain to you, Mr. Horncastle. I will tell you why, sir, I consented to become the banker of those individuals. The truth is, sir, that I knew the persons to be honest, industrious, and careful people, and it was partly for the purpose of encouraging them in these habits that I agreed to take into my charge any money they might save; and to allow them a little higher interest than they could obtain elsewhere. I pay

every Christmas what is due to them, and although it is small, it enables them to purchase a few articles that are required at that season, and which they might otherwise have been compelled to do without."

"If you receive the money of other people, I do not understand why you should refuse mine."

"I consider, sir (I shall be very plain with you)—I consider, sir, that I should be doing you an undeserving favour, if I agreed to do for you what I have done for the people I refer to. The charity would be misplaced, sir; that's what I mean. Now do you understand me, sir?"

"Perfectly. Good day."

Horncastle suddenly withdrew, and Mr. Crumbledust closed the door after him, with the air of a man who has performed a meritorious action.

THE RULING PASSION STRONG IN DEATH.

A SKETCH.

By Wynn W. R. Williams, M.A.

What an army of occupation over the mind is a single "dominant idea," and be it good or bad, how frequently does death recognise the investment! Such, indeed, was not the case with the good old Knight of La Mancha, when at the close of life's crusade he was stretched amidst mourning friends; for then, and then only, as their struggling sobs burst upon his ear, were old chords attuned to chivalry, and marvel hushed for ever; and the poor Don, with closing eye and sinking frame, descried, alas! his heart's chimera in all its pitifulness; still, as aforesaid, the bubble often holds good with life, and the following instance, which came under the writer's notice during a brief sojourn in Scotland, shows how, at the point of dissolution, all volitional control over the feelings was suspended in subservience to the one paramount during life.

In the ancient border town of S—— there dwelt some few years ago Mrs. Antony Leech, and although fate had placed her in what are termed easy circumstances, yet, morning, noon, and night, did a yellow-hued Gnome peep out of her restless eye. Golden was the mirror in which she contemplated all happiness supreme, and nothing prized, nothing loved, save what was reflected in its glittering depths. "Mites make the mass," she would mumble to herself, and certainly to have caught a single grain of the glittering ore would she have stood open-mouthed as the town-crier. Old sympathies, holy ties of kindred, household affections were so many dried sticks before her trampling march in quest of money; like one behoofed and behorned she overshadowed all good. She flourished in a small red-brick house, fronted by two gaunt poplars, which served as sentinels to protect the tenement from road-side invasion; and her fellow-sufferer in the same, for she cruelly stinted every morsel that found its way into the small homestead, was a broad, saddlenosed waiting-maid of a skittish inclination—clever at a rough estimate of the aggregate value

of candle-ends and tea-leaves. Mrs. Leech was antiquated, and not a bit like her servant Ruth in appearance, being straight and lean as one of the poplars, but to all intents and purposes quite her match in cunning and deceit, for she was at all times a busy woman, and her energies were but little impaired by years.

Our dame, as the chronicles of S—— do testify, was the relict of a broken-hearted tallow-chandler, who had, at one period of his existence, realised a considerable sum, and with which she had so unceasingly tormented him to speculate, that after a few vain efforts at dissuasion, the poor weak-minded chandler acted upon her suggestions, found cash melting away unprofitably at a quicker rate than ever his ware had done, and having, with what little remained, purchased a small annuity for his grieving wife, who, for the matter of that, if she could have gained anything by the cast, would have humanely destroyed him before his time, he sickened and died. And now was it that the little Gnome took a giant form, a spirit headlong and despotic, nigh to crush to destruction the weak chambers of her reason; then features blanched as if frostbitten were puckered up for soft impeachment; cheeks far more wrinkled than the hand that ever puzzled gipsy palmistry were painted and puffed for tender conquest; the long neck jerked in coquettish pleasantry, and although one would have as soon expected soft nonsense from a dried haddock as love-words from this whimsical specimen of womanhood, she thought to marry; failures unmistakable and constant effectually nipped her tender attacks upon the uxorious, and she was doomed to pine a widow easily circumstanced in the red-brick house.

Legacy hunting was the next employment of her money-searching soul, a vocation attended with far better success. Old Giles Leathercrop, the rich farmer, when he was toppled headlong from his mare and the gout kicked into him, in spite of loving wife and children was watchfully tended by Mrs. Leech for months, and it was a curious thing to behold her frizzling herself over a slow fire concocting a jorum of fishy ingredients; and if, be it understood, such had been the desire of the wealthy sufferer, she would have spiced the simmering pipkin with her tears, and thought nothing of it, for her stock in trade was as inexhaustible as the purse of Fortunatus. It might have been the intended effect of Mrs. Antony's balsams that an attack of premature dotage should succeed the attack of gout, or that the last-named malady should leave his heels and make its way towards the region of his heart, for certain is it, that he preferred the presence of his bustling old nurse, in her flapping frills and well-worn bombasin, to the tearful, anxious wife, who had been married to him for years—for weary years had been jaded with his caprice and harsh unmanly treatment, and who would even now have defended him in his incomprehensible apathy to her love and care. Here, there, and everywhere was Mrs. Antony indispensable, not only a motherly woman and a comforter, but a lady of strong perception (this was true enough); his wife didn't possess an homœopathic grain of common sense; and as for his children, as they stood crying around him, he told them they took after her, and not him. Whilst old Giles, however, was struggling to the death, and our friend anxiously abiding the issue, a physician from Edinburgh made his appearance, a distant relative of the patient's, and a man of some intelligence. He saw at a glance the interesting arrangement

of matters, ordered instant removal from Leathercrop Hall, and succeeded, much to our sweet widow's vexation, in getting the patient well out of the range of her medicine-chest. Her exchequer had been previously enriched with various sums obtained at the hands of Death. But this case seemed a hopeless one.

At a short distance from S—— lived the widow Mrs. Lushington Crusher, a lady like her friend Mrs. Antony, well to do in the world, and whom, together with four or five other dames (neither of them, by-the-by, school-girls or beauties), she was now entertaining. Mrs. Leech liked society much, and yielded to its fascinations—a few artificial flowers of kindness and philanthropy so far ornamented the poesy of her discourse that it was considered pleasant to listen to her; and she had been packed up by her servant Ruth in the old black-satin gown, wore the chandler's gold chain, and was quite the spirit of the party, making shrewd guesses at their financial prospects, and anticipating a little innocent plunder in the evening, for she played a good rubber; and when she had thrust her lean fingers into black gloves, for work, and was raking up the tricks, one would have imagined that the hoof of the unholy one himself was upon the card-table. The ladies had dined early, and were now grouped in Mrs. Lushington Crusher's drawing-room, and as the afternoon had been sultry, some, and Mrs. Leech amongst the number, were looking out upon the road leading to S——, which skirted a portion of Brakelton Moor. A figure in the distance, galloping upon a grey pony, attracted attention; in country places trifles meet with greater respect than in overgrown cities; and so heads were thrust forward, and eyes bent in the direction of the approaching object. After all, it is only old Mark Watts, the letter-carrier, with his well-known news-bag, and he has coaxed his little willing steed to the garden-gate, raised himself upon the saddle, and now holds forth an official-looking letter:—"For Mrs. Antony Leech," he exclaims, "to be delivered immediately; 'Important' is written on the kiver, ma'am, and I've comm'd in a hurry."

It was a lawyer's letter, and an especially pleasant one to Mrs. Leech, but she was very much surprised (and how many people have lawyer's letters not surprised?), and her disquietude was so evident and wonderful, that curiosity vanquished ceremony; head after head peered over her shoulder, and the ladies read and were contented. Giles Leatherorop had drunk the bitter waters of Toadingham—died—left a pittance for his family, and bequeathed twenty thousand pounds to Mrs. Antony Leech. Their first impulse, as the contents of the note burst upon them, and they considered in their women hearts the grievous wrong inflicted upon the destitute children and forlorn widow of the deceased Leatherorop, was to cast our friend out of open window; but then the poor dear had done nothing wrong, only a little out of the way, to be sure, and they thought of the twenty thousand pounds, and one and all congratulated her with sweet kisses, and offered their services. She seemed bewildered—she had been a mother, she said, to him, and his wife, and his children; she didn't care for rich folks' money, not she! And the long thin neck was jerked in scornful corroboration of her words, but, considering the circumstances in which she was placed, she hoped Mrs. Crusher, and her other dear friends, would lend her what money they possessed, for she must that instant—ay, that very moment—go off to S——, take post-horses for

E——, where Counsellor Deeds lived, and the distance was long, and the bank was closed; her utterance was incoherent, and she shook with agitation as if in a fit. In their disinterested enthusiasm, every coin the house contained was collected—copper, silver, and gold—and off she started with her pockets full. Now one need not be a professional day-dreamer, dear reader, to cast a look upwards on a summer's day, and from the vapoury masses piled on high discern cartoon-like visions of much that animates the created globe beneath battlements, host against host, ships tost and wrecked, a well-known form will soon come thronging round Fancy's standard, be it ever so gently raised; and so it was with Mrs. Antony Leech, when she found herself hobbling onwards over Brakelton Moor, her mind lorded over by one idea. The distance across the heath was a matter of a mile and a half, much shorter than going by the road, so across the heath she went. The weather had been stormy and threatening, the soil was marshy and heavy with moisture, and miry pools were here and there scattered amidst the undulations of the ground. Nature's mood to-day appeared more favourable; the warm air hummed with circling worlds of tiny insects, the chiming bells of a distant hamlet melting o'er the lea came home to ear and heart, whilst the white smoke of a cottage seen afar hovered like a dove over the scene, the spirit of peace appeared to pervade the landscape—how different to the fierce exultation of the old woman's frenzy! Onwards she hurried, onwards; and as dank spots of herbage met her step, she trembled, but onwards still, as never wearied, whilst as gaunt reeds and waving grasses were released from her feeble tread, they bent after her, and rustled complaints to the breeze as the dews of heaven swept abroad from them. "Units—tens—hundreds," she shivered forth convulsively, grasping a handful of the coins in her pocket; and as the gale gently arose, and obedient to its stirring breath clouds swept across the mighty firmament, she looked, and above was a semblance of the postman's head and outstretched arm—her mind's colossal effigy. She paused—yes—and there was old Mark's very letter-bag. The sun cast bright beams, touched the clouds with his golden spear, and the outline glowed with veins of fire. "All gold," she murmured; "all gay and good—hundreds and thousands, and thousands upon that—all gold!" And then, as if dazzled, gazed confusedly downwards, and, lo! there again at her feet, reflected in the stagnant water with the distinctness of mosaic, gleamed the picture. Suddenly each feature grew inflamed and quivering—apoplexy smote her, and with a croak—that of a bull-frog, she fell upon her face and died—died by the visitation of God.

The wind arose, the form above became divided and subdivided into countless fleecy particles, which gathered and swelled into darkening masses of shade, and with thunder, as if to jar the very universe, the livid sky poured forth its rain, torrents fell, as if to sink into their kindred depths of earth the corse and its darling treasure. And thus she died, through life's brief pilgrimage cheered by no light-directing beacon of charity or good-will, and to the last a victim to the all-absorbing influence of her master-passion.

THE STOLEN GIFT.

BY JOHN STEBBING.

My efforts had been again unavailing; no one wanted either me or my work. The lamplighter hurried past me; the groups of holiday-making children were on their way homeward; and when I paused at the corner of a street in perfect indecision whither I should next turn, a party of stone-masons returning from their work seemed almost to crush me with the loud heartiness of their voices. The business streets reminded me too bitterly that I had no part in their thriving activity; and if I wandered through the quiet ones the warm light through many a parlour and drawing-room set my fancy on a path which it could not follow without tears. My feet and knees were so weary that it was only shame that prevented me from sitting down on a door-step. I had had nothing all day but a cup of tea at the coffee-house, where I went to look at the advertisements in the *Times*; and, in fact, for three weeks past I had subsisted only on the plate of bread-and-butter provided for my tea by the people with whom I lodged.

Another day had passed, and I was again fumbling for my latch-key, with no alleviation to the despair with which I had set out in the morning. I felt almost like a beggar as I opened the door, for I owed eleven weeks' rent, and had received a note that morning from my landlord, imperatively demanding the arrears. I crept softly along the passage and gained my room unmolested; all was dark, of course, and I was too miserable to care for a light. Completely overcome by hunger and fatigue, I sank into a chair by the table and stretched out my hand in the direction of the tea-things; they were not there; they were sometimes placed on the dressing-table. Alas! in a moment more I discovered that they were nowhere in the room. Sinking down by my bedside I buried my face in my hands and sobbed violently. My wretchedness was too great to allow me to rest quietly, and again I entered the black shadow of the crowd of men.

At first I thought I would go to one of the bridges and sit on the parapet watching the tide rushing through the arches, and seeming in the lamplight like a hurrying crowd of forms urged on by pain, and despair, and defiance; but when I reached the corner of the Quadrant and saw the distant lamps at the further end of Piccadilly, like the lamps of ships at sea, I turned my steps towards the parks. The night was very sultry, and a few heavy drops began to fall; and as I continued walking on in a state of dogged misery, I looked forward with pleasure to the prospect of a great storm. I was not disappointed, for shortly the sky poured down floods of rain, whilst the whole atmosphere was illumined by sheets of blue flame, and the forked lightning hissed along like the sudden rent in a rock of adamantine fire. Looking round for a place of refuge from the soaking torrents, I beheld the spacious portico of a noble house overlooking the park, and brightly lit by a suspended lamp. I had stood there for some little time, forgetting my sorrows in the contemplation of the magnificence of the storm, when I heard footsteps approaching, and was soon joined in my retreat by an Italian organ-grinder.

He was a middle-aged man, dressed in the picturesque costume of his

class and country: of moderate height, but of an extremely muscular build. He stood for a few moments on the top of the steps, leaning on his staff and looking into the night, and then placing his organ in one of the further corners of the portico, he laid himself down, resting his head against his instrument, and went to sleep. The exile from his own sunny clime, desperately toiling for his bread in the bleak crushing metropolis of the North, was sleeping as soundly at my feet as I had ever slept in those years gone by when there were woodland flowers all the summer in the vases on my bedroom mantelpiece. I gazed on the sleeper's countenance, and saw too plainly through its Italian grace the traces of outward weariness and inward sorrow; the state of his shoes proved the one, and for the other, at that moment he slightly turned with a restless uneasy motion, and a tear stole from his dark eyelash down his cheek. I had but one penny left, and I had partly come out with the idea of purchasing a loaf with it, but my hunger had quite left me now, so I laid the penny down by the side of the sleeping man and went away.

The storm was over, and the cool wind flapped against my cheek. The air was buoyant, and I walked briskly forward, feeling that the world was not so bad after all. But suddenly the faintness and the weariness came upon me again as the sirocco, and I would fain have been as the camel of the desert to hide my head in the sands. What miserable infatuation had induced me to give away the only thing which had been between me and utter destitution? I walked on, and reached Hyde Park-corner. There was a stall there at which they sold coffee and bread-and-butter—a cup of coffee and a slice of bread-and-butter for a penny. I felt my eyes straining towards the provisions, but I made an effort and turned away: I was destitute. Then a wild thought came into my head;—I had only laid it down; I had not given it; he might not have waked yet; it was mine still! I reached the portico out of breath, and, O joy! he still slept—the penny was still there. I crept cautiously up, held my breath as I stooped, and once again held the coin in my grasp, when the dark eyes opened and fixed me where I stood. Oh! the daggers of suspicion that gleamed from those eyes into my soul! Like a criminal at the bar, I waited while the man took a bag from his bosom and poured from it a few pence into his hand; he counted them and put them back; he had evidently not been robbed; but he seemed to have suddenly discovered that Italian customs are not altogether safe in London, for he left the portico with a sadder expression than that with which he had entered it. I threw the penny into the gutter.

NICHOLAS FLAMEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CONFEDERATES; OR, THE DAYS OF MARGARET OF PARMA."

XLVIII.

WHETHER private grief, public difficulties, or deep remorse preyed upon Philip's mind, or the uselessness of his crime, the utter failure of its real object weighed him down—for Clement had not yielded so completely to the king as to allow him to reap all the seeds that he had sown, the riches of the Temple being, for the most part, in the hands of the clergy—he was no longer the man he was before the event of the 14th of March. His countenance was overclouded; his head drooped; there seemed to be a corrosive sorrow at his heart; perhaps he shared the opinion of the world at large that his days were numbered.

A strange incident seemed to give validity to the grand master's prophetic words. The Pope, who had removed to Avignon—it is said to enjoy the society of the Countess of Roussillon, to whom he was passionately attached—was seized with a virulent fever, and expired within the month after the tragedy on the Isle St. Louis. A circumstance attended his burial which, with the superstition of the time, people regarded as a direct manifestation of divine wrath—it was, indeed, of a nature to gratify the vulgar taste for the marvellous.

When his body was exposed in the principal church in Avignon a violent storm arose, the lightning struck the building, and more than half consumed the corpse, its charred remains being scarcely recognisable when consigned to the tomb. So says the chronicle.

It cannot be supposed that Philip was less struck with the coincidence of Clement's death than other people of his day; and superstitious dread may have contributed to shorten his days. Be that as it may, his own fate was not less calculated to impress the minds of the credulous with reverential awe than that of the Pope. At the time appointed by Jaques Molay, whilst yet in the pride of manhood, the grave closed upon him. Mezeray says the cause of his sudden death was involved in much doubt; people being uncertain whether to attribute it to a fall from his horse when hunting, mental distress, or "something worse:" by which expression, we suppose, this great historian would insinuate foul dealing—perhaps the drugged cup. The latter supposition, and that Jaques Molay, in summoning his persecutors to appear at the foot of the Divine throne within a given time, pronounced sentence against them, seems probable; for the same fatality was observed to pursue most of those who were party to the great tragedy which may be said to have closed Philip's reign.

Enguerrand de Marigni did not long survive his royal master. Charles of Valois, brother to the late king, who, under the plea of his nephew's youth, although the latter was three-and-twenty, and had been crowned

King of Navarre during his father's lifetime, took upon himself in great measure the cares of the administration, sacrificed that obnoxious minister to the hatred of the people, backed, doubtless, by no small dislike of his own. Louis le Hutin, himself of a cruel temper, was easily persuaded to yield up this man to popular fury. His trial was more summary than that of his victims. The measure he had dealt to others was meted to him again with usury. The immense property he had accumulated by pilfering the state was wrenched from him, and he was hanged at Montfaucon on the very gallows he had erected for more innocent men than himself. His body being removed thence in a sack, was dragged through the streets of Paris to the cry of "Laissez passer la justice du roi," until it was finally thrown into the Seine.

One morning, not long after the body of Enguerrand had been removed, the sun rose on two more corpses hanging from the same gallows. On being taken down they were found to be pierced with stabs, and recognised as the remains of Nofodei and the Prior of Montfaucon. The executors of this act of rude justice were never discovered; but no doubt was then entertained but these men had fallen a sacrifice to the vengeance of their betrayed brethren.

So that it may be permitted to suppose that the Templars were not quite ignorant of the instrumentality by which their iniquitous persecutors—the Pope and the king—were, each at the time appointed by the grand master, called to their great account. The fever that glowed in the Pope's veins, and the dubious ailings that terminated Philip's days, may not, perhaps, have been uninfluenced by poison; and the fire that consumed the body of the former destroying thereby all evidence as to the cause of death, may not have descended from heaven.

The remnant of the Knights Templars, dispossessed of their goods and station, concealing with care their connexion with a proscribed society, wandered about in penury under various disguises. Some, indeed, were received as licensed followers in the noble families whence they sprung, and eat the bread of dependence. A few even recovered territorial property in default of other heirs, and covering with a thick veil their past life, freely enjoyed the advantages of their new situation, marrying and continuing their line. Many entered the Order of St. John, and some retired into religious communities of a stricter character. It cannot be doubted but the secret avengers of their wrongs were to be found among the former class—vengeful because desperate.

In other countries the Order experienced a milder fate. The different sovereigns seized their fortresses and goods indeed, and more lucky than the King of France, contrived to keep the latter; but beyond an unjust spoliation and dissolution, no rigour was practised towards them. In England and Bohemia they were treated with the greatest leniency. In Spain they merged into the Order of Calatrava, and thus retained many of the advantages they formerly enjoyed; their brilliant valour being useful against the infidels that infested the coast, and whose incursions into the Christian provinces greatly disturbed their repose.

The military orders in Germany, with which some think the Templars, after their brilliant but fruitless resistance, were incorporated, continued to exist long in that country from a similar cause. Prussia was rescued from barbarism and idolatry by the good swords of the Teutonic knights,

and the Baltic provinces—Courland, Esthonia, Livonia—owe their civilisation and German nationality to the knights of St. Mary.

With regard to the distinctions so invidiously drawn between the innocence of the Templars in general and the guilt of the French portion of them, there can be no doubt but they were utterly groundless. The records of the torture-chamber prove beyond dispute that under its infliction the stoutest hearts have quailed, and the most glaring falsehoods been established. And when it is remembered that their confessions were indited by their enemies, who had their own motives in preserving unity in the form and substance thereof, their coincidence cannot be considered as a matter of moment, or affording any proof.

As to the theories in which modern German writers, especially Hummelaur, indulge so largely about the famous idol-head which they accuse the Templars of having imported from the East, and attempt to deduce from the Jewish cabala, when we consider the deep ignorance of those days, the care with which the Jews are said to have concealed this mysterious aberration, and the little probability there is that they would entrust their secret to the keeping of these warrior knights of a faith inimical to their own, even admitting that the proud Christian nobles would have stooped to become the adepts of a caste so despised, they seem equally doubtful.

Still more fantastic is the attempt to trace this theory in the emblems which Hummelaur says may yet be seen on the few remnants of priories and chapels once possessed by the Templars. First, because doubt must ever exist as to such buildings having originated with, or even belonged at all, to the Order. Secondly, because piety and fancy loved in those days to clothe themselves in symbolical forms, which may be read according to the turn of mind of the gazer.

Many a learned writer has lost himself in wild conjectures respecting the adoration of this mysterious head, spoken of in the forced or invented depositions of the Templars, confusing their readers and themselves with cabalistic explanations of those very allegorical figures with which painters and sculptors at that period decorated not only Temple priories, but almost every monument of art. But it should be remembered that the learned of those days, not content with thus veiling their views of religion and of science on architraves and cornices, extended this figurative style even to their writings; many of which are as dark and mysterious as the hieroglyphics that have puzzled the learned Hammerstein himself; at all events as unintelligible to the modern reader as the doubtful effigies on these presumed Temple houses seem to be to the zealous inquirer of our times; showing, as I presume to think, too general an usage to admit of local application.

The reader will, it is hoped, pardon this digression into which the writer has been led by the subject.

XLIX.

The royal obsequies were followed by some of more humble pretension. The soft air of that spring sighed over Dame Flamel's grave; and though she was not so gentle or kind as might have been desired, her practical good sense, and the natural interest she took in the family,

made her loss felt even by Pernelle. To Nicholas, whose guiding spirit she had been from his cradle, the blow was heavy indeed. Mindful now of her oft-repeated injunctions, he abstained from his favourite pursuit until Pernelle herself, thinking it the best means of combating his depression, urged him to resume it.

Thus tempted, he easily fell back on his former course of life, removing his crucibles from his cellar, where he had heretofore carried on his operations, into the little back room which he had hitherto shared with Pernelle—an arrangement which placed him in her vicinity, and within call for any chance business. The house, indeed, since Dame Flamel's death, seemed large to these two lonely beings; and they shrunk instinctively into the smallest space that its void might be the less apparent.

Nicholas now became more companionable with Pernelle, gradually confiding to her the basis on which his hopes were founded. She was taught to watch the Sand Bath in which the king and queen were plunged, and to understand how the Eagle devoured the Lion, quite as well as the mysteries of her stewing-pan; and she felt well-nigh the same anticipative horror, when a loud clang in the adjoining apartment announced the bursting of a retort, as when a hissing on the logs told her that the milk-porridge overflowed. Flamel, in fact, had now found that greatest of earthly treasures—a credulous listener to a favourite theory.

Weeks grew to months and months to years without any material change taking place in their situation. They remained alone; no child having brought them additional care with additional pleasure. But Pernelle's sisters had young families growing up around them to whom her affections clung, and Flamel could not but regard his privation as a blessing, since his poverty, until his search after the great discovery should be crowned with success, seemed confirmed. But poverty was an easy burden to bear alone, or with his hopeful and enduring companion wrapt as he was in a never-dying dream, in never-wearying research. The excitement which binds the gambler to the fatal table is not very dissimilar from that which, in those days when science was young and its limits undefined, bound the alchymist to his illusory pursuit. Perpetual failures occasioned no discouragement—the fire had been too violent or too slow. Had the retort but held good one day more—had it not burst at the very crisis, the mystery must have been laid bare, and Master Nicholas Flamel the happiest and richest of men. But envious fate ever interposed at the eve of success, and baffled his best-laid plans. Nevertheless, a little patience and, thanks to his former experiments, he must triumph.

He had now discovered by bitter experience that lead made gold brittle; that sulphur destroyed its cohesion; it was impossible—as he explained to Pernelle in their long Sunday walks in those solitudes which are now the most populous streets of Paris—but that, taught by so many lessons, he should at last be able to remove those mighty obstacles which still rose mountain high in his path; and the gentle Pernelle was confident that the essence of gold might be extracted from the noble metal itself, as the flowers are robbed of their rich perfumes. She believed, hoped, and trusted—as love teaches women to trust, hope, and believe, in the object of their affectionate reverence; nor was she any more than Nicholas disheartened by failure: for she, too, was undergoing a secret process

of disappointment, which far from shaking her faith only made it more ardent. She had tried every saint in turn, and every vow by which each was most likely to be propitiated, to obtain the great boon of success to her husband's undertaking; and the saints heeded not her vows and rejected her proffered candles. But Pernelle had a strong and a hopeful nature—she wearied not in her endeavours, and trusted no less in the mercy of Heaven than did Nicholas in the powers of nature.

Thus time sped on unmarked by them. King Philip had been succeeded by two of his sons successively, who died without leaving male issue. The beautiful Marguerite of Navarre had been strangled in prison by her husband's order. Jeanne, in virtue of her inheritance, had been called back to fill her place at court until her husband's death, when she whiled away her widowhood in the Tour des Nesles, of whose romantic and probably fictitious episodes she was the supposed heroine. Her sister Blanche, following her advice, had demanded the dissolution of her marriage with Charles the Handsome, upon the plea of too close a consanguinity, and had retreated to the convent of Montbuisson, where it is said she led a gayer life than she had done in the king's palace.

All these events took place unnoticed by the scrivener and his meek companion. Kings were inaugurated and interred—queens made their triumphal entries into Paris—Charles of Valois committed crimes and repented of them, and Nicholas and Pernelle, wrapped in their own thoughts and pursuits, remained in ignorance of facts which moved all Paris besides. But at last their anxieties were engaged in a matter which touched them nearly.

It must not be supposed that Nicholas had remained all this time wholly without employment. The Templars, having secretly executed vengeance on most of their enemies, were indeed heard of no more, though, doubtless, they had means of recognition among themselves, and still entertained wild schemes relating to their ultimate reintegration, such as sects and parties are wont to do after a fall. Those mysterious epistles which had been Flamel's chief source of livelihood during the winter that preceded the death of the king, ceased with that event; and though, with his modest wants, the payment he had received for them enabled him to support the loss of those regular customers during the better part of the succeeding summer, at the expiration of that time he must have starved had he not been fortunate enough to obtain orders for copies of certain romances and ballads, in the ornamental part of which his name had long been famous. This did very well for a time; but his work was so slow, divided as his time was between profitable occupation and speculative study, that his employers might be pardoned for seeking elsewhere a less careful but more rapid hand. With sorrow Pernelle beheld them drop off one after another, until Nicholas's pen became once more idle; but without his having the advantage, as with his former clients, of funds remaining to him over and above his work. Every day they experienced some fresh privation. Restricted in their best days to the simplest necessaries, they now verged upon absolute want.

At last the uncomplaining Pernelle could no longer disguise the terrible truth from the unobservant Nicholas—starvation stared them in the face. They could not always draw upon the kindness of her sisters, and what was to be done? She suggested the propriety of their re-

moving to Bethune, and claiming the protection of Robert, Count of Bethune, as Peter of Boulogne had recommended; where, though they were no longer to be dreaded as witnesses to acts that had ceased to interest any one, they might for his sake still find protection: but Nicholas, who had in his own mind connected the death of the king with the mysterious letters he had indited, had conceived such a terror of the very name of Templar that he would not hear of the plan.

The moment the all-important fire was extinguished for want of fuel —the moment Nicholas was forced to pause in his dream for lack of means wherewith to pursue it—he perceived how bare was his hearth, how gloomy and hopeless his position. No faggot, no light, no adequate raiment to protect himself against the cold—all the decencies and proprieties of a burgher's existence had gradually disappeared from his home.

When thus rudely thrust out of his golden world into this iron reality, despair, not unmixed with self-reproach, seized upon him. In vain did Pernelle seek to lay the whole blame on circumstances; the still small voice within told him how much he had aided and abetted them by his neglect of all the practical duties of life. And if he had but his own suffering to lament, his lot might have been more endurable; but Pernelle's dim eyes, shrunken form, pallid cheek, and coarse, worn garments, would have made her barely recognisable as his fair bride of a few years ago, but for the never-changing, intense affection beaming from her eyes, and the gentle, uncomplaining smile that illumined her countenance as of yore like a ray of comfort.

It was in these hours of dark despondency, when the utter vanity of his dreamt-of discovery flashed upon his mind—when he asked himself how he could have been made the dupe of an insane delusion, throwing away the best years of his life in a search after the impossible—it was then that the true value of Pernelle's character shone forth. Her friendly soothing voice was ever in his ear, chasing away the dark clouds from his mind, and sustaining him under the trials they had now to endure. She soothed his remorse, reassured his conscience, and sustained his hope. Her simple mind, illumined with womanly devotedness, suddenly inspired her with a fervid eloquence—taught her to speak the words that console, that elevate, that strengthen. She had the sublime courage, whilst on a winter night creeping close up to her husband's side in the darkness of their fireless chamber, when shivering with cold and weak with hunger, to speak of his ultimate success, of future comfort, and even of wealth, of a well-covered board, the gay dresses, the rich furs, the golden chain which would one day be his; and as her soft, low voice murmured forth these hopeful visions which she believed delusive, it soothed and lulled the sufferer as the nurse's lullaby soothes the fractious infant. He could almost fancy she was an angel of consolation speaking to him from above; and remembered with pious gratitude the manner of her election to her present office of mercy.

These ideas revived the deep religious feelings of earlier years; and the source whence Pernelle derived her fortitude became every day more efficacious in inspiring him with her own gentle resignation. But Pernelle felt that her consolations, however powerful, could not in reality mend Nicholas's condition. He could not live upon hope, however cunningly

administered; and she revolved various plans in her mind by which to extricate him from his difficulties—above all, to restore him to that mental vigour and bodily health which he had lost.

At last, having ripened one which seemed, under every point of view, most satisfactory, with fear and trembling, being uncertain how it would be received, she broached it to her husband. Her plans were naturally confined within the limited circle of her own ideas; but that which she hit upon, though simple enough—namely, that he should set out on a pilgrimage to St. Jaques of Compostella, in Spain, and at his holy altar implore his assistance at the great work—was devised by Pernelle, unconsciously to herself, with womanly shrewdness. It comprehended two grand objects—the beneficial influence of a change of scene, from the stagnancy of his present life to one of comparative activity and adventure, and a sure source of existence, for the pilgrim had always his meals and his couch either in the noble's castle, the convent, or the peasant's hut. The pilgrim was the licensed beggar of the age; but a beggar received with honour and treated with care. Each age has its peculiar resources; and Pernelle's good sense had pointed out to her means of seeking relief the best adapted to her times. At first Nicholas gladly embraced the proposal; then the thought of leaving her wholly destitute checked his pleasure. He expressed his uneasiness to Pernelle.

"Think not of me," she said; "let not so idle a consideration deprive us of the blessed intercession of the holy St. Jaques of Compostella. I shall live with one of my sisters, and lock up the house during your absence."

Nicholas's scruples being thus laid, Pernelle, to prevent his zeal from cooling, proposed his instant departure.

"But," said Nicholas, "how am I to procure the pilgrim garb?"

"I have thought of that too," replied Pernelle. "My sisters have provided the means."

This was only true in part. Odette and Colombe had, indeed, that morning remitted to her a small sum of money, but which for those days of scarce coin was a great proof of sisterly affection, with a recommendation to hoard it well, that she might be enabled, should poverty compel her to leave Paris, to join them, they being on the eve of departure to some distant city, where business necessitated their husbands' establishing themselves. These facts Pernelle carefully concealed from Nicholas, being determined to fit him out with the money, to ensure his weal at any and every risk to herself.

The next day was a busy and seemingly a happy one. Pernelle made the necessary purchases, and Nicholas concealed his manuscripts, phials, and crucibles in a secret recess in his cellar, which he had before used for that purpose.

"If," said he to Pernelle, taking her below, and showing her where he had deposited those things on which he once set so much store—"if your sisters weary of hospitality before my return, do not hesitate to sell all this trash—nay, the house itself; for, indeed, if St. Jaques of Compostella interfere not in our behalf we have no chance of being able to retain it; and," he added, pressing her hand, "I think I should like these transactions to take place during my absence."

"We'll see," said Pernelle. "One recommendation I must make," she

added, after a moment's pause—"it is that you enter freely into conversation with whatever persons you happen to meet by the way."

Nicholas's brow overclouded.

"Nay," she added, quickly, "think how by so doing you may chance upon some one able to furnish you with hints relating to the secret on which you have so fruitlessly employed your time."

"True," said Nicholas, his eye lighting up; "I may, too, be of service in communicating to others my own bitter experience."

The parting—the first since their union—was less sad than it doubtless would have been but for Pernelle's hopeful manner.

"May you, on your return to this dwelling," she said, calmly, "over which a cloud now hangs, find it, with Heaven's blessing, once more a cheerful, happy home, with new views, new hopes, and a fair lot before you."

"Do no doubts darken your mind, Pernelle, as to my return?"

"None whatever, Nicholas."

"Nor do I entertain any of again seeing you safe and in health," he said, clasping her to his breast. "Heaven bestowed you on me, and will not so soon take back the gift."

Not until she had lost sight of the pilgrim's robe and large shell-adorned hat, did Pernelle give way to weakness; when, re-entering that now truly desolate abode, she sobbed as if her heart were breaking.

L.

ALTHOUGH Nicholas was not aware of the helpless condition in which he had left his beloved Pernelle, conceiving that she was under the protection of her sisters, still he felt an unconquerable depression at this their first separation. He was going far, far away from her, under other skies, over distant hills. There was not then the unutterable comfort of a post—no letter could soothe the anxiety of either party—that friendly vehicle of sentiment and wit was unknown, and no means existed to inform the absent of the life or death of his nearest and dearest. He might be looking forward with rapture to clasping the beloved one to his bosom on whom earth had lain for months. Whatever now threatened Pernelle, Nicholas, far from being able to avert, could not even become aware of it. Such thoughts banished from his mind that repose and serenity which are the best travelling companions, and embittered the first few days of his journey.

It was early in spring. The roads, even in the best season bad, were now heavy. Nicholas was not a good walker, and made but slow progress; but gradually new objects soothed, if they could not dispel, his gloom, and the fresh flowers and herbs springing up on either side the road engaged his attention, and gradually restored his philosophical bias.

When the magical properties of plants were as stoutly believed in as any article of faith, Nature had more interest for its votaries, in a tenfold degree, than it has now, when no poetic delusion, no dream-like promise rest with flower, herb, or stone. In these days natural philosophy seems to have little more to do—it is a well-beaten highway where each successive foot has left its print for ages, and each passer-by his landmark. There may be much left for discovery, more for curiosity; but practice and ex-

perience have taught us the limits within which Nature works. There was, however, intense poetry in her first dreamy miracles, and in the supposed boundlessness of her power. The poetry of credulity and ignorance shed a charm over life of a peculiar kind, of which science, sharp and definite, has robbed the imagination to enrich the physical world with its brilliant results.

We now know the rapture that opium may convey and the death it can cause—we know that arsenic may cure as well as kill; but can we look on opium or arsenic as once looked the student on the divine Perforata that was thought to leave no wound uncured, or those still more delightful sympathetic plants that were supposed to have the power to obtain water from the arid sand, and to throw wide the prison-gates—which could govern the affections—change indifference or even hatred into love? And, above all, whither has fled that golden dream, the elixir of everlasting youth? As some one has observed that Astrology was the foolish mother of a wise daughter—Astronomy; in like manner it may be said that natural magic nurtured the growth of botany, chemistry, and other natural sciences; but Flamel, in lack of much knowledge of the offspring, was well content to devote his every thought to their prolific parent, and thus each floweret that grew upon his path he regarded with reverence and awe.

His mind being thus diverted, he became more hopeful; and remembering Pernelle's last injunction, began to chat freely with what wayfarers he met, ever in the hope that some one among them might possess more knowledge of those subjects which so deeply interested him than himself.

Nor was he without deriving advantage from his affability. Some had been palmers to Holy Land, and had marvellous tales to tell of its fruits, its flowers, its trees, which were full of charm to Nicholas. Others had been wanderers to St. Jaques of Compostella, knew well the road and the dangers to be encountered by the way, and narrated wonderful tales of the Moors, and their powerful enchantments. He met, too, begging friars who had heard of old monks having discovered the philosopher's stone, but so buried their manuscripts that chance only could ever bring them again to light.

In spite of himself, Nicholas was diverted. Now books and the daily press have put so much lore at man's command, that his fellow traveller can tell him nothing which he has not either already read of or may gather at his convenience from the printed page; and it argues no small stock of sociability and love of one's kind—two things that are getting all the rarer from being so much talked about—to feel interest in a chance acquaintance. But it was not so then. Each stranger accidentally met was, as it were, a journal or a new book to be perused, and eagerly perused, for through him alone could daily information or knowledge be imparted; and though we now fly over space which was then crawled along, it cannot be doubted but the simple wayfarer of that remote epoch experienced, in his arduous wanderings, a mental excitement denied to our facilitated peregrinations.

Nicholas did not arrive at Orleans in fewer days than it can now be reached in hours. The trifling supply of money Pernelle had been able to afford him after the purchase of his travelling costume, was untouched;

all gates having flown open before his pilgrim's garb, and some few purses even contributed to his store: so that he had the means of procuring a comfortable supper and night's lodging in the city, where, doubtless, he would be expected to pay for his accommodation.

Stopping at the first modest hostelry he fell in with, and entering the kitchen, he seated himself upon a small stool beneath the huge chimney canopy, awaiting his simple meal, without heeding an aged man who sat opposite to him on a similar stool scanning his features with deep attention. But Nicholas's thoughts were far away from his present resting-place. His soup being ready, he was quietly enjoying it, when the old man, moving his stool close up to him, whispered his name. Nicholas started; and gazed intently at the withered countenance without being able to connect it in his mind with any remembrance.

"You don't know me?" said the old man, shaking his head mournfully —"no wonder—I have had my share of sorrow since we last met, and am breaking fast—very fast. But if you will come up to my room after your supper it will give me pleasure to renew our acquaintance and to talk over old times."

Nicholas at once acceded to the proposal; and hastily finishing his soup, followed the stranger to a dark closet which he called his room, when, being seated on a bench beside him, he was enlightened with a few words.

"You have, then, forgotten your old acquaintance, Canches?"

"The Jew!" exclaimed Nicholas.

"Hush!" said Canches, putting his finger to his lip. "We are perfectly aware that the edict recalling us from banishment is shortly to be published; still, until then, none but the boldest of us, even on an occasion of imperious urgency, would venture within this realm, or think even this disguise a safe one"—he pointed to his Christian garb. "But I come on a mission that can no longer be delayed—my days are numbered —my years are full—I am ripe for the sickle, and have no time to lose. I could not wait the publishing of the new edict. But it's all in vain—the journey has taxed my strength—I doubt me I shall not be able to attain the end of my journey. God, I think, has sent you hither as an especial grace that, should I be unable to achieve my task, it may not remain unaccomplished. If you are not pressed for time—and from the dress you have assumed I am inclined to suppose you are not—perhaps, for the sake of old acquaintance, you will consent to stay here a few days, during which I shall either mend or grow worse."

"I would not refuse your request," said Flamel, with embarrassment —"but my purse is not heavy—I may not linger on the road."

"Well," said the Jew, after some hesitation, "your presence will add to my safety and comfort. I do not mind taking all the expense upon myself."

It is a query if Nicholas's good-nature would have extended so far in favour of a Jew, had not Canches bethought him of touching the right chord. Money was no temptation, but the promise of laying before him a fresh manuscript, referring to the invaluable Vinegar of the Wise, shook Nicholas's resolution. True, the delay of his blessed pilgrimage might rouse the jealousy of the saint, and would inevitably protract his absence from his beloved Pernelle; but how resist a hook so temptingly baited.

"And do you really still believe in the existence or the power of this Vinegar? For I own I begin to doubt both."

"Though I cannot pretend to say I can make it," said Canches, "I cannot doubt its existence or its power; for I have seen it with my own eyes, and marked its effect. It is a ruby-coloured liquid, and glistens like fire—the very sight of it infuses strength and joy into the heart. I had immediate proof of its virtue. Its possessor and I went out together, bought some lead and copper, and put them separately on the fire to melt. Upon each metal in turn, when in its highest state of ebullition, he poured a certain number of drops of the precious liquid, carefully measured out in a spoon. Violent commotion ensued—then almost instant coagulation. After a little time the contents of either vessel were poured forth, and judge of my surprise and rapture when my eyes encountered pure gold. I tried it by every known means, and it stood every test. Nay, perceiving that, at each trial, he had poured a little more than the necessary quantity upon the gross metals, which had been made apparent during ebullition by a thin, ruby star, transparent as crystal, rising to the surface of the boiling substance, and afterwards adhering to the gold like a thin scale, he carefully removed it with the edge of a knife, and, diluting it in spirits of wine, restored it to its original liquid state, into which he dropped a piece of glass, and again placed it on the fire. Under the gentle heat the glass became as malleable as wax, without losing its transparency. Amazed at what I saw, I did not attempt to conceal my feelings. 'I will show you more,' said my companion, with a laugh; 'look at me, I am a hundred and fifty years old.' He was a well-built, stalwart man, seemingly about thirty, his black eyes flashing like diamonds. 'You doubt,' he added, reading incredulity in my look; 'but I will prove my words true. Have you observed the servant of this posada?'—for what I am narrating took place in Spain, the country you are going to. 'Do you mean that filthy old hag, who served me my supper?' said I. 'I do,' said he. 'Pshaw!' said I; 'a monster!' 'She may have been pretty in her youth, though,' replied he; 'one must not always judge from appearances.' He called old Pepita up-stairs, and inquired her age. 'Sixty-five,' was her answer. I should rather have said eighty. Her hair was snow-white, her face the colour of tanned leather. When she laughed, it was a display of toothless gums; her figure was bent, and her fingers were stiffened into claws. After examining her narrowly, my companion said: 'There has been beauty in that face, and it requires no great physiognomist to read on that wrinkled brow the passions that have scared it; there has been a magic in the silver tones of that now croaking voice.' 'You say truly,' observed the old hag; 'but what avails it now? It's all the harder, I trow, to be looked upon with disgust when one was once admired. The averted eye is almost as bitter to her whom all looks once sought, as the hand uplifted to strike. Age may be less bitter to those who have never known the rapture of admiration; but it is gall and wormwood to be the slave, after having been the mistress; to prepare food for swine with hands that gallants have saluted; to lay on filthy straw, after having sat on satin cushions.' Whilst she was thus running on, my companion carefully counted and poured out a few drops of the ruby liquid into a small wine-glass. 'There,' he said, holding it out to her, 'drink that,

it'll comfort you.' 'Oh! what genial heat!—what a delicious glow!' sighed the old woman, the moment she had swallowed it. 'Sunshine glows within me—my pulses beat quicker than before—a new strength is nerving every limb!' I gazed on her as she spoke with increasing bewilderment. Her figure gradually became straight, her hair darker, her eyes recovered a strange lustre, the tips of her teeth began to peep through her gums, her limbs filled out, her form rounded, her complexion glowed, and soon there stood before us a being of such entrancing loveliness as I scarce ever remember to have seen before in the heyday of woman's beauty. As I stood, lost in amazement, my companion presented her a looking-glass. 'A miracle!' she cried, in rapture. 'I am myself again—my graceful form—my bright eyes and languishing smile—my pearly teeth—my glowing cheek and lip—I have them all again.' 'And you'll make no better use of them than you did formerly,' said my companion. 'I might claim you as my prize, but you do not tempt me.' 'Oh! now,' said she, with a merry laugh, 'I want nobody to be happy—I can carve out my own fortunes!'

"I then discovered that she had been a Moorish girl, more celebrated for her charms than for her discreet use of them; age and misery having compelled her to adopt Christianity and perform menial service. I now learnt, too, that my companion was likewise a Moor. I could not obtain the precious liquid from him—nothing would induce him to part with even a modicum of it, urging that it had cost him too much trouble to make; but he gave me this manuscript, which he assured me contained the true receipt, 'only,' he added, with a leer, 'you will find it a riddle rather difficult of solution.' And a riddle it has proved! for to this day I have been unable to make anything of it."

"When met you this man?" inquired Nicholas, who had listened with growing interest to Canches's narrative.

"About three months after our last failure with those unhappy young Templars. But what befel you that dreadful night? I knew harm would come of it when I saw *him* in the Temple, so I left Paris hurriedly for Spain. But alas! these reminiscences recal all my woes!"

"And did you never again see either the Moor or the woman?" asked Nicholas, without heeding Canches's question.

"I did. Sojourning for a short time in the gay town of Sevilla, I once again met the woman. She had a brilliant golden baldric round her waist, and was the most celebrated Lais in the city; the Moor had judged her rightly. The last I saw of him was at a splendid tournament at Grenada. His armour, as well as the shaffron of his steed, was of gold link, set with precious stones. He so glittered in the sunbeams that no eye could rest on him; it might be owing to this circumstance that none could stand before him, for he laid them low as the wind lays the corn. I couldn't get near him then, and never saw him afterwards."

Poor Nicholas was now as completely vanquished as any of the Moor's adversaries. Canches's recital had prostrated his resolution—the saint himself fell before the might of the manuscript, and the wily Jew detained him thereby day after day on very meagre fare in the hostelry at Orleans. Whenever he betrayed impatience he was allowed a glimpse at the mystic pages; and the Jew's flowery descriptions of Spain, its Moors and gipsies, its starry and perfumed nights, its gay tournaments

and adventures of different kinds, made the time cheerful that might otherwise have hung heavy on their hands. But Canches waxed weaker and weaker, and the completion of his journey seemed less probable every day. He soon became unable to divert his companion with tales of distant lands; but Nicholas, compassionating his condition, still lingered near him. After the expiration of another week he perceived a serious change for the worse. The angel of death had set his seal on the old man's brow: conscious of his approaching end, Canches collected all his force, and said:

"Now I must unburden my whole mind to you. I can no longer reckon on days and hours—minutes only are left me. Here," he said, drawing from his breast the vellum-bound volume, "take the manuscript together with this key"—remitting a heavy house-door key to Nicholas—"I enjoin you by everything you hold sacred, and with my dying breath, to remit both to my granddaughter, Rispah. You will find her at the cloister of Montbuisson, where she has taken the veil under the name of Sister Renata." Canches covered his face with his hands as he made this admission, and a sob escaped him. "It was my intention to throw myself at her feet," he continued, "to humble my white hair in the dust before her, in the hope of bringing her back to the faith of our fathers. I meant to offer her a bribe that might have tempted a crown queen—I counted my paltry life as nothing could I but have restored her to the God of Israel. Had I been able to trace her sooner, I should long since have accomplished the task; but it was long ere I discovered her retreat, though I might have guessed that that dark Dominican would point out to her the only road to advancement."

"But if heavenly truth have touched her heart, old man," said Nicholas, severely, "how dare you shake her belief!"

"It was not belief!" exclaimed Canches, with a convulsive heaving of the breast—"it was not belief—it cannot be! She may have yielded willing assent to the persuasions of Father Imbert; but she was too proud to bear the contumely heaped upon our race. It was pride, I tell you—nothing but pride! I know it well. She would be the Esther of some Ahasuerus; and when she discovered the fallacy of her hopes she could not brook the lot to which she was born! But she is the only child of my blood—of seven fair sons and daughters she only remains, the one feeble offshoot of a once flourishing tree; and I will forgive her all the misery she has caused me, and bless her from my grave, if she but return to the law of our fathers. Give her that book and that key, and tell her my dying words—it is the key of my house Rue Galilée—the manuscript will tell her the rest."

Nicholas protested against delivering the message relating to Rispah's relapsing into Judaism; but the protest came too late, Canches had swooned, and in that swoon his soul passed away. Nicholas would not stay in the town to see him buried; for he must have declared his knowledge of his religion, and this he did not deem advisable. The effects of the deceased he left unexamined, taking nothing with him but the key and the volume that had been expressly remitted to his care. Not until Orleans lay many miles behind him did he ask himself how the errand he had undertaken comported with his pilgrimage. This was an awkward point of conscience. Was it not his duty to pay his respect to the saint

and execute his trust subsequently? But he felt a great reluctance to keeping anything in his hands which belonged to another, and which he might lose on the road; all things considered, therefore, he determined first to do Canches's dying bequest, imagining that the saint would forgive him the postponement of his journey on so plausible a pretext, and resume his pilgrimage afterwards. But Canches's faith again conjured up doubts as to his present mission being agreeable to St. Jaques of Compostella. Was he not performing service for a Jew? Was he bound to keep faith with him? Would he not be even justified in breaking the tacit engagement he had made with him?

These and many more scruples afflicted Flamel's mind during the first day; but at night a sweet dream came to relieve it. St. Jaques of Compostella himself appeared at the foot of his bed, and assured him that it was his special pleasure that he should not only postpone, but altogether abandon his pilgrimage to his shrine. Having thus announced his will and pleasure, the saint took the key which Canches had remitted to Nicholas, from under his pillow, and with it opened the volume, which amazed Flamel the more that it seemed to have no lock.

"With this key," said the saint, "you will likewise open this volume, which has a lock though you perceive it not. It is my pleasure that you retain them both; for to you they will bring what you seek, but to no one else on earth. In vain would you resign them to Rispah—to Pernelle alone can their possession be granted, for her piety has wrought this boon to you. Return to her without delay, for she is sorely in want of your assistance—I will not have that good soul tried beyond its powers—go and comfort her; and when your wishes are accomplished—as accomplished they will be—instead of vain pilgrimages to my shrine, make a noble use of the fortune which Heaven awards you. There is no way of showing gratitude for favour received but in the performance of good works."

Elated with this dream—for dreams had significance in those days—Flamel retraced his steps to Paris with a lighter heart and lighter step than when he left it. Though much impressed by the revelation he had just received—for thus he interpreted his vision—he still determined to remit the book and key honestly to Rispah, trusting that if the saint really meant these objects to become his, he would also find means to make them lawfully his property; for he certainly could not have meant him to commit a theft. The house-key did not tempt Flamel, but the mysterious manuscript did sorely; and to avoid yielding to any weakness on that score, he scrupulously avoided to cast his eye on its charmed leaves during his journey.

LI.

It was early in the morning when Nicholas reached Paris, having reposed over-night in its vicinity. His first step was to make for the convent, so impatient was he to discharge his duty, which he felt would become the more difficult to go through the longer he delayed its performance. But it was no easy thing to gain access to the interior of the convent of Maubuisson; though rumour said that a certain small postern at its rear was more frequently opened than comported with the sanctity of monastic seclusion, or with the dignity of this retreat of royalty.

At Nicholas's summons a forbidding countenance appeared at a small grated hole in the door, and a harsh voice demanded his business.

"I would have speech of Sister Renata, an it please you," replied Nicholas, timidly.

"With Sister Renata, forsooth!" exclaimed the grim portress, eyeing Nicholas scornfully. "Jesu! is the man mad? What can such as thou have in common with Sister Renata? Go to! Knowest thou not that this holy lady is high in favour with the Princess Blanche of France, and spends most of her time in the royal oratory, and when out of it—for she is of extraordinary piety—is wrapt in devotion at the foot of the altar in the convent chapel? Get thee gone, man! Sister Renata has no leisure and no thought to bestow on such as thou."

"But my errand is of importance, and must be done," persisted Nicholas. "I have just closed the eyes of her nearest relation."

At these words the portress's countenance assumed a more encouraging expression.

"Her nearest relation, sayest thou, young man? Thou art, then, acquainted with Sister Renata? Under what circumstances hast thou known her? It is strange this holy maid's piety, beauty, and, doubtless, the magnitude of her dower are much spoken of in the convent, and have exalted her above the sisterhood even to the high place of companion and friend to the royal lady; but no one can say whence she came or what her lineage—a thick mystery envelopes her—who may she be, I pray thee?" And the portress devoured Nicholas with her eyes in the eagerness of her curiosity.

Flamel did not feel called upon to unravel the mystery which apparently caused so much uneasiness to the old woman; but cursorily explaining the nature of his commission, without entering into details, she became softened in some degree, and even deigned to inquire if Sister Renata might be spoken to.

After an absence of half an hour, she returned with the information that Sister Renata was still in the princess's oratory, where she consented to receive him. Nicholas was accordingly conducted through the yard towards the principal building, and up a private staircase leading to the apartment exclusively devoted to the princess. As he passed through the outer rooms, he could not but remark that nothing in their decoration spoke of cloistral seclusion or ascetic habits. Lutes and silver veils lying about on tables and chairs, seemed to show that the Lady Blanche led pretty much the same life at Maubuisson as she had done at the palace. In the third room Nicholas was motioned to remain, and his conductress retired, leaving him to draw his own conclusions from what he saw. A door partly open gave access to a small room beyond, which Nicholas rightly conjectured to be the oratory.

"Now do," said a child-like voice from within—"do, dear Renata, let me hear what this strange man has to say to you."

"It must not be, dear lady," answered a more melodious voice—"it is a mission of mourning, and you know you hate tears—I may not be able to restrain them."

"Ah! that's a different thing," said the princess. "If you intend to cry, you are quite right to give me fair warning."

During this short colloquy, Nicholas, slightly changing his position,

glanced at the speakers through the open door. A fair form, in an azure robe wrought with the golden lilies of France, sat in a canopied chair; a slight, dark, but beautiful creature, in the sombre habit of a nun, reclining at her feet on a pile of cushions in the Moorish fashion, in whom Nicholas had no difficulty in recognising Canches's grandchild. The Princess Blanche was still beautiful and youthful looking; but when the nun rose and advanced towards him, taking care to close the door behind her, he perceived how time had made its impress on that once lovely, but now stern countenance: and as he gazed on her thoughtful brow and firm lip, he became convinced that her submission to the princess's levity was one of the sacrifices which ambition imposed on her aspiring spirit, and that her grandfather had read her heart aright.

As Rispah was about to speak, the door behind her was gently pushed ajar, and a blond and merry face appeared at the opening. The princess would be present at the interview in spite of her, probably for the very reason that her presence was so obviously not desired.

Rispah, however, without turning round, became aware that she was watched by her august companion, and remained silent, considering how she should open the conversation so as to put Flamel on his guard not to betray any previous acquaintance with her.

Nicholas, seeing her embarrassment without guessing its cause, drew from his vest the ponderous key and the precious volume.

"Accident," said he, "threw me in your grandfather's way at a critical moment. I attended him in his last hour, and closed his eyes. He entrusted these objects to my care, with instructions to remit them to you as part and parcel of your inheritance; and though I bound myself by no promise, still the wishes of a dying man are sacred. With his last breath he gave utterance to a certain desire respecting you which I cannot, as a Christian, give utterance to: perchance you may guess its purport."

"I do—I do," said Rispah, hurriedly; "repeat it not to me—it were but giving me unnecessary pain. I could not comply with that desire were he here at this moment to urge it."

"This key," continued Flamel," is the——"

"I know it well!" she hastily interrupted. "It is the key of the house we occupied together—but I shall need it no more. I know that volume, too," she added, gently waving back the manuscript which Nicholas handed to her. "It could be of no use to me here—or, indeed, elsewhere; retain it—to you it may be of service. Nay, nay—reason not with me—the key and the book I freely bestow on you. When I was in the world, and possessed of the world's goods, I was wretched—here my spirit is refreshed. You know I speak truly," she said, fixing her keen dark eyes on Flamel; and, leaning towards him, she whispered rapidly: "Accept without demur what Heaven sends you—would you have me burnt for a witch, or scorned for my extraction? I am happy, be you so likewise."

A clear voice from the next room uttered in no measured tones a sharp rebuke about whispering and mysteries.

"There—there—go now," said Rispah, aloud; "I would be alone with my sorrow."

Nicholas withdrew from a place where his presence was evidently a

source of the liveliest apprehension. The saint had kept his word; the book and the key were his lawful prize, and his conscience being at rest on that point, he set forth to seek Pernelle.

It will be remembered that Flamel had not been apprised of his sisters-in-law's intended departure; great, therefore, was his dismay on finding their dwellings locked and tenantless. A presentiment of evil shot across his heart. He hurried home. No wreath of smoke, however faint, issued from the chimney; the shutters were closed, the door was fastened as when he left it. Had she departed with her sisters, or had one and the same misfortune swept them all away? The thought was maddening!

He ran to St. Jaques la Boucherie, his own parish church, but there he found her not. In his anxiety he felt neither hunger nor fatigue; but hurried from church to church where he thought piety might have guided Pernelle's steps. Towards evening he reached a quarter of the town remote from the street where his house was situate. The church bells were ringing for vespers, and he entered the porch, mechanically, to perform his devotions. At the door stood two females holding out their hands for charity. Nicholas, who since he had known abject poverty never passed by the indigent without a commiserating word, turned towards them, when, to his surprise and joy, from beneath one of the dark hoods beamed a soft countenance never absent from his thoughts—it was his own Pernelle. A glance, a pressure of the hand, was enough. Entering the church together, side by side, they returned thanks to Heaven for their restoration to each other; nor until they had left the sacred edifice did he inquire by what accident she was in such a strait.

"By no accident," she answered, with her sweet soft accents; "all was premeditated before you left Paris. My sisters were going, and I could expect no further assistance from them. But if I could not share the perils of your journey, I could share your manner of existence. Were you not indebted to good men for your night's quarters and for each day's sustenance? why should I fare more sumptuously or recur to other means of living than you did? Shame! why should I feel shame? Had I not seen a proud Templar stretch forth his hand for charity? But I was happier than he, for I was never great or proud."

"And I fancied you safe under your sister's roof! How lonely and desolate you must have been in their absence and mine! all alone, and Paris so insecure!"

"My security," said Pernelle, smiling, "was our well-known poverty—and most people thought the house uninhabited; for I left it early, returned late, and burnt neither fire nor light within it. As to loneliness, I will own"—and she blushed as though the weakness had been a crime—"that it has fearfully weighed upon my spirits. But yet I felt relieved in thinking how much less wretched you must be in God's free air, and in the continual change of scene, than if you had remained pent-up in that dark, cheerless home of ours; and then I hoped that reflection, or some lucky chance, or rather"—correcting herself—"the blessing of St. Jaques might lighten your way. In this manner I was sustained and comforted."

Nicholas looked at the devoted creature so free from all thought of self, her features lighted up with the fervor of her truthful heart, and fancied that angels must have faces similar to hers. The soul divine breathed in

those eyes and in that smile. No passer-by, who might have noticed her humble garb, unpretending looks, and simple manner, would have dreamt of the precious gem contained in that modest casket; but the possessor knew and prized it more than life. Only by degrees did he perceive how much she had suffered during his absence; but the rapture of that day, she assured him, would repay her for months, instead of weeks, of privation.

On their way home they purchased a small stock of provisions—Nicholas's purse still retaining some proofs of the charity he had met with on the road. They entered together that dark, chill abode where everything spoke of sorrow and disappointment to Nicholas, and threw a cloud over the happiness he experienced at finding Pernelle; but when the shutters were thrown open, and admitted the fresh, warm, spring air into the deserted chamber, and the light played upon her husband's features, Pernelle felt a golden ecstasy at her heart, such as she had not known for months past. He, whom she had almost deemed lost to her—whom she had feared at times never to see again—was here in safety by her side, by his own hearth, at his own table, enjoying the modest meal she had prepared with her own hands!—how few of the most brilliant banquets yield enjoyment equal to this little feast of love!

One shadow fell over her gladness—the pilgrimage had yet to be accomplished; but Nicholas narrated his dream, and thus dispelled the last vapour that hung upon her bright horizon. She listened with breathless interest to the recital of his meeting with Canches, his subsequent interview with Rispah, and its result—the possession of a house in the Rue Galilée, and of a manuscript by which he could not fail to solve at last the long-sought enigma. The fable which Canches had palmed upon Nicholas as to the manner of its acquisition, was one drop more of nectar in the simple Pernelle's cup of bliss; and golden visions danced more brightly in the water of her drinking-horn than ever foamed up in Champagne, Rhenish, Malvoisie or Cyprus in crystal or silver.

As the happy pair hastily sketched their plans that evening, they at first spoke of the immediate sale of their newly-acquired house; a little reflection showed them, however, that, as the Jews were so soon to be recalled, it would be wiser to wait for that occasion, when they could dispose of it more advantageously. In the mean while, they determined to raise a small sum on it sufficient, by good management, to live upon during the limited space which they thought necessary for the discovery of the grand secret.

How few among the many who crowded that part of the town where this obscure pair dwelt, could have guessed, or believed in, the happiness experienced that day beneath their lowly roof! How few could have understood the rapture of that meeting—the ineffable tenderness of these two beings for each other, in whom the indifferent, or the thoughtless, would have seen so little to inspire it: so few remember that that is most lovely which is most truly beloved. Golden dreams succeeded the golden visions of the day; and the sun rose not brighter next morning than the hearts which greeted its first rays in the scrivener's house.

LII.

HAVING donned once more his student's robe, with the mysterious volume open before him, Nicholas prepared to pore over its mystic pages. On the first leaf Canches had scrawled a few Hebrew words which Flamel could not decipher. In other respects, however, the manuscript, now that he examined it more at leisure than he had been allowed to do at Orleans, seemed similar to that already in his possession. Silver and gold, ever represented by Adam and Eve with the emblems of the sun and moon about them—the Eagle devouring the Lion, typical of the congelation of mercury, or, as the phrase then went, the volatile becoming fixed—symbolical images of life and death—all were there, executed in the same indifferent and quaint style as in the former volume. It was also written in Latin; which seemed strange, coming, as Canches said it did, from a Moor; and poor Nicholas's heart began to misgive him about the value of St. Jaques of Compostella's present.

One image, however, was new; and though in itself insignificant, his attention was called to it as he turned the pages from its frequent repetition—varied, as it seemed, according to the whim of the artist. It was a chalice between cross-bones; now simply represented—now a hand at the bottom of the page pointing significantly towards it. On one sheet a Moorish boy, with turban and sable face, was represented raising from the earth a large stone on which that device seemed graven.

Long did Nicholas ponder over this mystery without coming to a satisfactory conclusion. At last, he thought it probable that the Moor typified the fortunate discoverer of the great secret; pointing out the means by which from a humble lot he could raise himself to happiness—in the language of the time, he was "raising the lid of the great secret, and he would soon drink of the chalice of ecstasy."

Pernelle was not slow in discerning the thick cloud again gathering over her husband's hopes; and to divert his mind, perhaps also to gratify her own curiosity, she proposed a visit to their newly-acquired possession in the Rue Galilée. Nicholas, with undisguised pleasure, put aside the traitor in vellum who so poorly answered his rich expectations, threw on his cloak, and sallied forth.

They talked of Rispah and of Margot as they went along. What had their youth and loveliness brought them to?—the one to a convent—the other to a grave!

"All aspirations—all eagerness," said Nicholas, "seem destined to meet with rebuff or disappointment. To such meek spirits as yours only, my Pernelle, is true happiness assured. Eager, impatient beings like Margot find no resting-place in this cold world of ours—their crown is of thorn, and their cup of wormwood."

They turned into the palace-gates, no longer the royal residence—Philip's successors having removed to the Louvre—but its immediate precincts continued to be a sanctuary, and were filled as of yore with an idle throng.

Nicholas well remembered the Jew's house, which he had once before visited during the occupancy of its owner, and made directly for it, reach-

ing it unobserved by any one, the street being still deserted. The door opened without difficulty; but Pernelle did not cross the threshold of a dwelling which had been the home of one of the abominated race without scruples of conscience. Not even the feeling of property could enable her to overcome a prejudice strong as life itself. The rooms were small and empty; the walls uneven and bare; not a three-legged stool or simple hanging showed that it had once been the abode of many individuals of whom not a vestige remained.

They entered, and cast their eyes over one room after another with ill-disguised repugnance, and, though they certainly did not expect to find wealth, with a certain air of disappointment stamped upon their countenances. Having visited the house from top to bottom—which took no long time, for it was not large—they returned to the principal apartment, and, after a last inspection, were about to depart, when Nicholas's eye was attracted and his curiosity roused by a mark on the wall indicating the existence of an opening into a closet or some inner room which he had not yet entered. With much minuteness he proceeded to examine it. He knew not why, but his whole fate seemed bound up in this discovery. With indefatigable patience did he scrutinise every square inch of the wall, until, to his inexpressible joy, the old oak wainscot yielded to his pressure, and the wall slowly opened upon a dark closet. The door being left wide open, however, admitted a feeble light, and enabled them to inspect the interior.

It was empty, like all the other rooms in the house. Overcome with disappointment, Flamel stood in the middle of the closet the image of discouragement, asking himself why he had put forth so much eagerness in a vain inquiry, when Pernelle suddenly exclaimed:

"Look, Nicholas! How strange! Surely this must be the house which Margot wished so much to find—on which she said so much depended. Did she not mention that very emblem?"

Nicholas started, and turned his eyes in the direction of her outstretched hand. There, painted on the wall, were the chalice and cross-bones, rudely executed indeed, as by an unskilled hand, but clearly distinguishable. As Nicholas stood gazing at it, endeavouring to shape out some connexion between this rough sketch and the same emblem represented in his manuscript, Pernelle again spoke:

"Poor Margot! How she wished to discover this spot which we have so unexpectedly chanced upon! What idea could she attach to it? She spoke of riches—do you remember? Riches in this empty, crumbling old house! What a strange delusion! She said a chalice and cross-bones was a mark of the Templars—they may be for what I know; then she said the Sire Almeric d'Aulnoy was heir to all the wealth here contained, but that she had been on the watch for other Templars to guide them hither to share it. Poor thing! it is dreadful to think how her mind wandered!"

At these words a light broke in upon Nicholas. He recalled to mind what Peter of Boulogne's companions had said with reference to a treasure abstracted from the Temple; the intimate connexion of Canches, at one time, with the Templars; and the wild, disjointed sentences that broke from Margot that fatal evening by his own hearth about great

wealth within reach, a house she had been enjoined to seek but could not find, and an emblem which evidently had been deeply impressed on her memory, began to take shape and consistency. Almeric had been no less desirous that she should reach that house than Canches had been to remit it to his granddaughter; both must have had strong reasons for their insistance; those reasons were, doubtless, the desire that each should profit by what it contained. Long and earnestly did Nicholas gaze on the emblem; then, without uttering a word, motioned Pernelle from the closet, carefully closing the door after her, and descended to the street, when locking up the house they returned silently homeward.

Both Nicholas and Pernelle were very thoughtful that evening; the one contemplating the really golden prospect the saint had opened to him, the other absorbed in recollection of poor Margot which the morning's visit had conjured up.

"Yes," mused Nicholas, his ideas clearing; "there must be more in that wall than meets the eye. Therefore did Canches so often repeat the symbol in his manuscript, which is, doubtless, the work of his own hand; he wished it to attract the eye of his granddaughter as it did mine. She is, of course, acquainted with that closet."

He communicated his views to Pernelle; but far from being elated with the notion of wealth accruing to them from such source, she even felt reluctant to profit by it in any way. Nicholas overcame her scruples, however, and even persuaded her to accompany him again to the house, whose very atmosphere seemed tainted with infidelity; so true is it that the best do not escape the narrow prejudices of their age. Accordingly, on the following morning, Nicholas, accompanied by Pernelle, once more embarked on a voyage of discovery; but this time, instead of crucible and pan of coals, a hammer, a strong knife, and a short iron bar were the means by which he hoped to attain his end.

The hour was yet early, and few people were abroad, so that, as on the previous day, they had the satisfaction of reaching the house without attracting observation. Carefully locking the street-door behind him, Nicholas ascended to the first floor, pressed the secret spring, which now opened easily at his touch, and, assisted by Pernelle, with a beating heart set about his work.

The painting was executed on the plaster, and looked like an imperfect fresco broken at the edges, so that an accidental observer might have supposed it to be the remains of a subject that once covered the whole space of the wall. Nicholas, however, striking it with the haft of his knife, discovered by the sound, round and full, not only that it concealed a hollow, but that a wooden panel lay beneath the plaster. Carefully knocking right and left, he ascertained the extent of the cavity; then driving in his crowbar with a few strokes of the hammer, he exerted his strength, and, with a violent effort, effected a breach, the plaster falling in large flakes to the floor. Inserting his arm, not without some trepidation—for after all this dark hole might contain but a colony of rats—his hand came in contact with some object, which he hastily caught up and drew forth; it proved to be the handle of a Turkish scimitar studded with precious stones.

Thus confirmed in his expectations, Nicholas set about in earnest

widening the breach. But it was no light task to remove the panel, which had been firmly fixed in the wall, with the instruments he had brought; and after working with great patience and perseverance for the better part of an hour, he was obliged to admit the impossibility of enlarging the opening sufficiently to effect an entrance.

Pausing in his labour, he set about reflecting upon what was next to be done. The first thing necessary was to procure more tools—a saw was indispensable. It is true that by means of a crook he might draw to the orifice one object after another; but this would be working in the dark, and by such means he could never ascertain what treasure might lie hid, or out of reach. No—he must enter this excavation, closet or whatever it might be, and in order to do so he must saw away the panel. It was with much vexation that he acknowledged the necessity of leaving his work for the present; and although the closet in which he stood was concealed by a secret spring door, and the house was locked, he felt nervously alive to the possible discovery of the treasure by another during his absence. A house was easily broken into, and he remembered with uneasiness how readily he had guessed the existence of the hidden door, and with what facility he had opened it. The treasure, too, was all but exposed to view, and he had no means of again closing the wall. This risk was, however, unavoidable, so summoning what stoicism he could to his aid, he prepared to depart.

In the outer chamber he again examined the handle of the Turkish scimitar. Here, at least, was no delusion. It was of gold, and the jewels, flashing in the light, seemed stones of price. A short piece of the blade was still attached to it, bearing the appearance of having been severed by a stronger weapon, probably in combat. There could be no doubt but it was a trophy of Eastern warfare, and had belonged to the Templars; and Nicholas was now convinced that what lay concealed in the recess was of the same kind and propriety. When, or under what circumstances it had been transported to the Jew's house, he could not conjecture, nor was the question important. It was enough that it had belonged to those who had no lawful heirs to claim it, and that in profiting by St. Jaques's bounty he was clearly despoiling no one.

Tranquil on the subject of his own right, Nicholas set about inspiring Pernelle with the same confidence, not forgetting to mention the saint's evident desire that this treasure-trove, the spoils of the infidel, should not revert to unbelievers. He touched the right chord. Had Pernelle remained in the belief that this was Jewish wealth, it might have weighed more heavily on her conscience; but the spoils of heathen, but chivalrous Saracens, were not so objectionable, and the wonderful coincidences which had led Nicholas through so many channels to the point where he now stood, were, she thought, so many tokens of divine interposition in his behalf.

To paint the joys of that evening as they sat together beside their hearth—joys so tumultuous yet so chastened in expression—were impossible. Notwithstanding their ecstasy, however, Nicholas found leisure to canvass the best mode of removing the various objects from their present hiding-place, and to devise a secret for their concealment in his own house, and Pernelle to dream of the splendid wax-tapers she would offer

at her favourite shrines, especially that of the blessed St. Jacques, and the gorgeous robe she would bestow on the Virgin; whilst she determined, if ever a pale Templar again extended his hand towards her, she would drop gold into it instead of copper—for had he not fought and bled, hungered and thirsted for the treasure she was about to enjoy?

Never was a more silent evening spent under that solitary roof; and yet had any curious eye penetrated through the casement he must have been struck with the expression which reverie imparted to countenances otherwise so little striking. Nicholas, with his thoughtful brow, his scintillating eyes and compressed lips, sat the very personification of wrapt thought. The absence of all passion from Pernelle's chastened spirit had preserved the outlines of her countenance in their pristine purity. Her brow and cheek were smooth as in her girlish days; and privation had prevented her form from expanding into the fulness of matronhood. The light of the lamp played on her pale, golden hair and on her colourless face. Her wheel stood idle before her; and with hands clasped on her knees, her head slightly bent backwards, her lips half-parted with an unconscious smile, her eyes beaming a calm delight, the beauty of serenity hovered about her such as a beholder might have fancied he had never seen equalled. The fairest women have their evil moments when their astonished admirers ask themselves how they could ever have thought them beautiful; and those who are pronounced plain have moments when they seem lovely—a chance disposition of light and shade, or a sudden illumination from within, evolve the mysterious charm or suspend it. Nicholas and Pernelle appeared that night what they really were—types of their class and times. In him was boldness of thought and humility of station tempered and regulated by church and law—in her, meekness elevated by faith. His meditation not impassioned or glowing, but deep and dreamy—her faith not fond or bathed in tears, but stout and honest, child-like and confident, not a mere holiday trance, but the very garment of her soul. True types both of an epoch when life, when opinion and feeling were bound by a thousand fetters—when each knew from his birth what steps he would tread, within what boundaries keep, and when the mind, thus steadied, kept its direct course without heeding wind or weather.

The narrowness of these limits assigned to existence and to the intellect may be supposed to have imparted a certain rigidity to the features and to the form, which is thought to have been transmitted to us merely by the inexperienced in the use of the chisel or the pencil; but such may in reality have been continually presented to the artist's eye and imprinted on his imagination.

LIII.

Nicholas, to his great joy, found everything as he had left it in the old house, to which he repaired early next morning, accompanied by Pernelle, and furnished with proper instruments; evidently no one had discovered his secret treasure.

With the aid of his saw he soon removed the panel and penetrated into the recess. It was not so large as he expected to find it, being too low

to admit of his standing upright, and only a few feet in depth; but it was sufficiently spacious to contain immense wealth, and he lost no time in examining the precious deposit.

The Turkish scimitar already concealed in his own house had prepared him for much, but not for the profusion of things now presented to his view. Saracen helmets encircled with precious stones; costly bits and bridles adorned in a similar manner; golden spurs and jewelled cups thrown together with necklaces, anklets of pearls, and girdles richly decorated with diamonds and rubies, seemingly spoils of Eastern harems, were succeeded by articles of European origin; strange-looking head-pieces and stomachers, and knightly gold chains, crosses, valuable missals, rings, daggers, even counts' coronets and other objects of price, whose presence there puzzled Flamel not a little. He found coins, too, of every kind and value, and of every clime, and quantities of unmounted rubies and emeralds of large size. There were, moreover, a few boxes, strongly bound with iron, which he would not open until he had them transported in safety to his own house.

The removal of all these things was no easy task. It was, indeed, the labour of months; for he dare not risk diurnal visits to the house, and he had to enlarge the secret recess in his own cellar for the reception of his prize. When, however, he made sure that nothing remained behind, he abandoned the house to its fate, determined to prefer no claim to it whatever.

For some time restricting himself, to all appearance, to his former manner of life, nothing transpired to awaken the curiosity of his neighbours or betray to the external world the change in his destiny. The sign-board still swung over his door, though customers continued to be as chary of their visits as if they had actually been wanted. His garments and those of Pernelle remained as simple as ever—their habits as unsociable. If their fare was more abundant and delicate than it had been in their evil days, Pernelle took care to provide it from quarters where she was wholly unknown. The alchymist furnace, it is true, was now fed with livelier fires than heretofore; but the Argus eyes of his neighbours could not divine the cost of such experiments.

When Pernelle saw her husband resume the arduous labours of the past, now that wealth fabulous for those days had become his, she could not conceal her astonishment; and in her simplicity asked him what interest he could still have in a research whose fruits he already so amply possessed, and might enjoy largely if he would.

"I do not wish to make gold," was the answer, "I want to know *how* to make it. There is a restless craving in every man's breast which must be satisfied either by action or by thought, or it preys upon his existence;—it is a nameless longing after something more than what is possessed, which no sum of earthly enjoyment can ever fully satisfy. The secret, therefore, of true happiness is to steady this longing by fixing it on some worthy and tenable point. The man of science has his discoveries; the artist his inspirations to fill up this blank which Heaven has left in the human heart, and not without a purpose. This rapid current of the human spirit keeps progress alive; without it humanity would have stagnated or congealed in its primary elements."

Pernelle did not exactly follow her husband's course of reasoning; but "it amuses him," she thought, "and he is right to do that which he likes best."

Once more Nicholas sought Rispah at the convent of Maubuisson; but he was informed at the gate, which he was not permitted to enter, that she had retired to a provincial convent far from Paris in a direction unknown. He immediately guessed that the assertion was false, but he had no means of forcing himself into her presence. A few years later he was confirmed in this belief by seeing in a procession the abbess of Maubuisson at the head of her nuns, in whom, despite the changes wrought by time, he recognised Canches's granddaughter. The manner in which she averted her face, and sought to evade his gaze, seemed to him a token of recognition.

A short time after the removal of his treasure the Jews re-entered France; and Nicholas, rather to his dismay than pleasure, got fresh customers. He could not help thinking with bitterness how welcome they would have been a few months ago; and recalled to mind his mother's oft-repeated remark about luck ever knocking at a man's door when it is too late to profit him. But Pernelle observed that Providence rules all things for the best, reminding him that had these customers come when they were most wanted, he probably would not have undertaken his pilgrimage, and consequently would not have found his treasure. No negligence, no overcharge, however, could discourage those who, from his manner of life and the privacy of his dwelling, preferred him to all other scriveners. He was not a little surprised at being called upon to draw up several successive deeds of sale for Canches's house. He thus learnt that the old man was the last of his tribe, and that it was suspected there lay concealed within his late abode the treasure of that tribe, a circumstance which might have explained to Flamel the nature of some of the strange objects he had found in the recess; but he carefully closed his eyes to the fact.

By degrees he gathered confidence, and enlarged the circle of his existence; making arrangements with Odette's husband, a jeweller and money-changer, whereby the latter was enabled to return to Paris and extend his connexion, it being easy by his assistance to dispose of jewels without exciting notice. Soon after, Colombe and her husband were likewise recalled, and they aided Nicholas in the same manner. The sale of the first few articles produced a sum far exceeding what he supposed them to be worth. Growing bolder, he began to make liberal use of the fortune which it had pleased the saint to bestow upon him, and well and truly did he obey the injunctions that had accompanied the donation. Hospitals, charitable foundations, and other benevolent institutions rose in quick succession.

His neighbours, made aware in times past of his favourite pursuit, by the bitter complaints of his mother, now loudly proclaimed him the discoverer of the philosopher's stone. The clergy, however, had no reason to seek too narrowly into, or to quarrel with the source of his dream-like wealth, Pernelle's watchful piety not having permitted his own to slumber. Churches and convents were built, and chapels endowed; science and art profited largely from the same source; free schools, too, were endowed,

and poor students assisted; rare manuscripts were procured at great cost and trouble from distant lands to enrich his native city.*

Flamel was now regarded as a demigod by a narrow circle of friends, a favourite child of the Church, an honoured citizen of fair Lutèce, his features being recorded on stone, and his name having been transmitted to posterity.

What now-a-days the popular orator or writer is to society, in those days of deficient institutions the founders thereof were to their country. Now the world applauds him who seeks to pull down and destroy—then it applauded him who strove to create; and man loves applause be its source what it may. Then, too, men had the sweet illusion of working for posterity, and for a grateful posterity; the workmen being few, and the work to be accomplished great. So many names are now thrown on the boiling waves of history, that individuality is lost, and oblivion threatens to engulph them. Nicholas Flamel cherished the notion of living among his kind in after generations; nor was he deceived in his hopes. He had found the true elixir of life—tradition took up his name on her golden wing, and has brought it down to our own days tinged with her prismatic charm, as a problem, a mystery unsolved, a riddle unread, which fancy may speculate and theory argue upon without fear of a troublesome reality, a proved fact, destroying the airy fabric. To his almost fabulous fortune tradition has alone given a clue; but its existence, and the manner of its employment, have been assured by history. The theory upon the art of gold-making attributed to him, is most probably not the work of his pen. It appears to be of a much more recent date than that in which he lived; but the arch he erected for himself and his wife in the Cimetière des Innocens, might, according to St. Foix and other creditable writers, have been seen by those who lived at the time of the first French revolution. The allegorical figures that surrounded the image of both the husband and wife, if, indeed, they have been faithfully transmitted to us, seem plainly to have alluded to gold-making; but, as we have elsewhere observed, the allegorical form, in which the artist of those days delighted, may just as well have been employed as a poetical allusion to piety, and instead of the transmutation of metals, the flight of the soul may in reality have been thereby typified. With the habit of thought of other days the key to its meaning is often lost.

In the last century, when the philosopher's stone was sought more ardently than ever it had been before, the alchymist eagerly grasped every straw that could warrant his belief and encourage his hopes; and the idea of gold-making being uppermost in the minds of that generation, the mystery of Nicholas Flamel's sudden wealth was made the subject of fresh inquiry, and invested with a fresh and keen interest. The old house in the Rue Marivaux was then searched, and crucibles, retorts, and sundry phials were said to have been found buried in the cellar; numerous books were written about its ancient proprietor, and everything connected with him became matter of moment. The romance of the Rose, written by his own hand, was at that time preserved in the royal

* Borel, in his "Trésor des Antiquités Gauloises," says that no less than 300 foundations of a pious, charitable, or useful nature, owed their existence to the same lavish hand and teeming mind.

library; and many an enthusiast went thither to investigate its pages, and thence to gaze on the mystic arch in the Cimetière des Innocens, and ruminate at the corner of the Rue Marivaux, where the scrivener once resided. To such a length did credulity or enthusiasm extend, that it is even recorded of Nicholas Flamel that he not only discovered the philosopher's stone, but also the elixir of life; and not content with assigning him a century of existence, which many writers affirm he enjoyed in Paris—basing this affirmation on the respective dates of his death and testament* registered at St. Jaques la Boucherie—some go a few steps further, and assert that Nicholas Flamel and Pernelle his wife have been, long subsequently to the last date, seen in India.

THE REAPERS' REST.

By G. W. Thornbury.

In the cool shade of the sheavings
Lie at noon the weary reapers—
And the floating breath of Heaven
Fans the hot brow of the sleepers;
For soft and low
The breezes blow,
To fan the weary reapers.

The lark has hush'd its singing,
Lest it wake the toil-worn reapers:
The crickets, chattering 'mong the barley,
Cannot rouse the peaceful sleepers;
The noisy song
Of their merry throng
Can only lull the reapers.

The wind moaned through the barley,
To warn it of the coming reapers;
The partridge, with its speckled cresting,
Flew startled at the silent sleepers;
And dewdrops fell
From the light air-bell
On the hot brow of the reapers.

Through the slender golden pillars
Creeps the shrew mouse past the reapers;
Leaves its young, on wheat-blade swaying,
To the mercy of the sleepers.
From corn-flower blue
The wild bee flew,
Its home trod down by reapers.

* Between the date of his will and that of his death there was a lapse of half a century; and in the document he speaks of himself as being an old man. It is to be regretted that this interesting record was destroyed in the revolution.

In the moving, wavering shadow
  Lie at noon the weary reapers;
And the children cease their playing,
  To sing hush-song to the sleepers.
    In lullaby
    The winds reply,
  For angels guard the reapers.

Timid lark hath left its nesting
  To be trampled by the reapers;
Dew it sheds from quivering feather,
  Benediction on the sleepers;
    Repays with song
    The cruel wrong
  Wrought by the sturdy reapers.

With its grey wings spreading over,
  Broods a cloud above the reapers,
Like a bird beneath its pinions
  Gathering all the silent sleepers;
    The sunbeams strong
    Around it throng,
  But cannot wound the reapers.

Crowded like the Indian's lodge,
  Rise the sheaves piled round the reapers;
White and thick the scattered barley
  Dropped around the silent sleepers.
    The blackbird's note,
    From copse remote,
  Wakes not the heedless reapers.

Like a gilded plume of feathers
  Wave the oat-sheaves o'er the reapers;
Like a guard with golden javelins
  Bristle wheat-ears round the sleepers.
    With bended head
    The poppy red
  Sheds balm upon the reapers.

Like men's hands upraised in praying,
  Press the sheaves above the reapers;
Very full of joy and gladness,
  Dream of heaven all the sleepers.
    Though soft and low
    The breezes blow,
  They *may* not wake the reapers.

THE LAST OF THE HOUSE.

By William Pickersgill, Esq.

XXXI.

THE STRANGER.

When Mr. Horncastle quitted the humble roof of Mrs. Wallford for the dilapidated mansion of which he had become the proprietor, Mrs. Wallford and her family regarded his departure with feelings of the most intense delight; and though the small pittance which he was in the habit of paying for his room had been of great service to them, they cheerfully consented to do without it, and to diminish their expenses of living. The selfish, unmanly conduct of Horncastle had created in the minds of these honest people the greatest disgust for his character, and his removal was, therefore, hailed with considerable satisfaction. There was one, however, whose absence had caused feelings of a contrary description. That was Merton. His gentle and unobtrusive manner, his intelligence, had caused him to be respected by every member of the family; and the little sitting-room of an evening appeared to be really less cheerful than it used to be when he was one of the party. His absence had affected them all, more or less. Fred, perhaps, felt it the most keenly, for they were constant companions, and there was scarcely anything known to the one to which the other had not free access. Fred, besides, missed him at the office, where there were so many things that required to be done which he was incapable of doing without the advice or assistance of Merton.

As the spring advanced, Mrs. Wallford's health became gradually worse. This circumstance produced a painful impression upon the minds of her children, for although the small income they were in receipt of would not cease with her death, yet, if she were removed, they felt as if there were none on earth who could fill the place that would thus become vacant; and, indeed, where is the friend that can supply the place of a mother? Where is she who, with a mother's affection, shall minister to our wants, anticipate our wishes, tend us with such earnest and patient solicitude? There is none. Painful—painful discovery, which is too frequently made after the grave has closed over her remains, and when she is alike beyond the reach of our gratitude or indifference.

One wet evening, some weeks after Merton had quitted Morlington, the Wallfords received a visit from a young woman, who said she was the bearer of a letter from a friend of theirs who had left London a few days previously for Italy. The young woman was dressed exceedingly plain, but her manners were those of a gentlewoman. Her face was pale and thin, but it was owing to illness and anxiety. Traces of beauty, however, were still to be discovered in the lineaments of her countenance.

"We have no friend in London, Kate, my dear," said Mrs. Wallford, "at all likely to go to Italy."

"I know of none," was the reply.

"Are you sure, young woman, that you have come to the right place?" said Mrs. Wallford.

"I am quite sure of that; but the letter will, perhaps, explain itself. It is there; you had better read it."

"Read it, Kate, my love," said Mrs. Wallford. "I can't decipher strange handwriting so well as you."

Miss Wallford having broken the seal, read as follows:

"Cecil-street, Strand, London.

"MY DEAR MADAM,—This letter will be handed to you by a young woman, with whose history I have casually become acquainted since my arrival here. There are passages in it so astounding and heartrending, that there are few persons, I apprehend, who can listen to them unmoved. I only touch upon her history for the purpose of enlisting your interest and sympathy in her behalf. I may, however, add, that during the last year or two of her life she has been living in infamy, into which she had been dragged by the treachery of one who ought to have acted as her protector. Whatever errors she may have fallen into, I believe she is now sincerely penitent, and desirous of atoning for her past misconduct. She is a stranger in Morlington, and as she is anxious to find a lodging on her arrival, I have taken the liberty to request that you will point out to her some place where the rent is sufficiently moderate to suit her circumstances. I must, however, further say that she is a gentlewoman by breeding and education, and that various unhappy circumstances have led to her present degraded situation. If I were not well convinced of her sincerity and penitence, I should not presume to address this letter to you. I feel assured, from the friendship that subsists between us, that you will do everything which the peculiarity of the case requires. I will thank you to remember me to Miss Wallford and Fred,

"And to believe me, my dear madam, yours very faithfully,

"ALFRED MERTON."

When Miss Wallford perceived that the letter was so intimately connected with the bearer, she refrained from reading it aloud; and when she had glanced over its contents, she handed it to her mother for perusal. By dint of a little patience and perseverance, that lady contrived to make herself familiar with the information it contained.

"Well, Kate, my dear," said Mrs. Wallford, "I am sure I don't know what to do in the matter. There is the small room up-stairs that Mr. Horncastle occupied."

Kate was silent. She did not know whether her mother would be acting with perfect discretion if she consented to suffer the young woman to remain under her roof.

"What do you say about it, Kate?"

"I leave the matter entirely in your hands, mamma."

"I beg, Mrs. Wallford," interposed Miss Morton (for it was she), when she perceived that there were some scruples in the way—"I beg that you will not put yourselves to any inconvenience on my account. I should be sorry, in the event of your permitting me to remain under your roof, if any part of my previous life should in any degree cast any discredit upon your family. I wish nobody to be injured in any shape by me. If

you are unable to afford me accommodation yourselves, or if you know of none who are able to do so, I must make further applications in the town, and endeavour, at all events, to find a place of shelter as soon as possible."

At this juncture, Dr. Dawdle and Fred, who had met by chance in the street, arrived. The doctor came skipping into the room, as usual, with his golden-headed cane in one hand, and a white hat in the other.

"Good evening, ladies—good evening," said the versatile little doctor as he entered.

Having scrutinised for several seconds the appearance of the stranger, he directed his conversation to Mrs. Wallford.

"How do you feel yourself to-night—a little better I hope, eh?"

"I am much the same as when you were here before."

"Take the medicine I sent you regularly, eh?"

"I have missed once, I believe," said Mrs. Wallford.

"That accounts for it, madam—that accounts for it. If you do not attend to my instructions, how can you expect any improvement in your health? Preposterous, madam, to suppose so—altogether out of the question—fact, I assure you."

"Omitting to take the medicine once, Dr. Dawdle," said Kate, "cannot, I should conceive, make much difference."

"My dear child," said the doctor, "it makes a great difference—all the difference in the world. I will endeavour to illustrate it. I will suppose that I have a patient whom I am in the habit of attending whenever I am sent for. My punctuality is relied upon. Well, the lady sends for me on a certain occasion. I refuse to go. I argue with myself thus: Well, I have always attended Mrs. Spooner on former occasions the moment I was sent for. I have been uncommonly attentive to her as long as she has been a patient of mine. There can be no harm in refusing to go in this instance—my neglecting her once will make very little difference. Now mark the result. Mrs. Spooner dies—Dr. Dawdle is, morally speaking, her murderer—fact, miss."

"That is not a fair illustration," said Kate.

"Nothing can be more so—quite a parallel case."

"Well, doctor," said Mrs. Wallford, "I must be more particular in future."

"If you wish to get better, madam," said the doctor, "you must obey my instructions to the letter."

"So much medicine is quite nauseating," said Mrs. Wallford. "I drank, I believe, two bottles last week."

"Can't be helped, madam—can't be helped.—By the way, Fred, I have a question for you. Suppose a patient of mine were drinking six pint bottles of my medicine every week, and were continuing to do so for twelve months, how many gallons would he swallow in the year? There's a question for you, my boy."

"I can do that with a piece of paper," said Fred.

"Fiddlesticks! you should me able to do it with your head."

"What quantity would he consume, doctor?" said Mrs. Wallford.

"Thirty-nine gallons of medicine, madam," replied Dawdle.

The reply of the facetious doctor was followed by a hearty laugh.

"Fact," added Dr. Dawdle.

"I have no doubt of it," said Mrs. Wallford.

"Well," said Dr. Dawdle, rising from his chair, "I have several more calls to make, and I must not spend my time here. Now, Mrs. Wallford, I give you strict injunctions to follow my directions. I shall send you some more medicine to-night, and when I call again, I hope to see you much improved. Good night."

When the doctor had gone, the conversation with reference to Miss Morton was renewed, and both Mrs. Wallford and Kate being greatly moved by her friendless and destitute situation, and being, moreover, a good deal pleased with her bearing and address, consented for her to remain at least one night under their own roof.

XXXII.

THE FRIEND OF THE FRIENDLESS.

On the day following, Mrs. Wallford and her daughter again reverted to the discourse relative to Miss Morton. During the few hours that she had been in the house, she had conducted herself with the greatest propriety, and, indeed, her earnest and serious manner led them to believe that whatever her previous faults and crimes might have been, she was now completely reformed.

Anxious to know something of her intentions, Mrs. Wallford said:

"Do you propose making a permanent stay in this neighbourhood, Miss Morton?"

"My object in coming here," said Miss Morton, "is to obtain a situation of some kind. Nothing of my previous character is known here, so that that, I hope, would prove no obstacle."

"What description of situation do you wish to obtain?"

"I should have no objection to teach a school, or to act as a lady's maid or companion to a lady."

"Do you know anything of dressmaking?"

"Very little, I'm afraid, although I can sew tolerably well."

"I have some relations that I am not frequently in the habit of calling upon, whom I will go and see, and inquire if they know of anything likely to suit a person like yourself."

"If you will do me this favour I shall be extremely obliged," said Miss Morton, "for I am anxious for some employment."

Mrs. Wallford lost no time in calling upon her relations the Claverings. This excellent woman had consented to throw aside all personal consideration, in order, if possible, to render a service to this helpless and unfortunate girl, who appeared to be so destitute of friends and connexions.

In an early part of our story, the connexion that subsisted between the Claverings and Mrs. Wallford has already been alluded to. It was, therefore, with some diffidence that she sought an interview with Mrs. Clavering. If it had not been for the pressing circumstances of the case, she was the last woman in the world of whom she would have asked a favour, for she was one of those persons who, whether they refuse or confer an office of kindness, fancy in either case they are putting the person under a great obligation.

"Well, what a stranger you are!" said Mrs. Clavering, when Mrs. Wallford was shown into the room. "Clavering and I have been wondering for the last six weeks what has got you."

"The truth is, I have been very little out lately," Mrs. Wallford replied, "and if it had not been for a little particular business which I have on hand, I should not have been out to-day."

"Well, and how have you been since we saw you last? Dr. Dawdle, who, by the way, is the only one who is able to give any information about you, was saying that you had been very unwell again."

"I have been very poorly indeed, but I am a little better, I think, to-day."

"Ah! you must take care of yourself."

"How is Mr. Clavering?"

"I am happy to say he is quite well."

"The business respecting which I have made free to call upon you," said Mrs. Wallford, "is this: a young woman, who has been recommended to apply to me for advice and assistance, and who arrived last night from London, desires some kind of employment, whereby she may be able to earn a livelihood. I am unfortunately not in a position to do anything for her myself, but it occurred to me that either you or some of your friends might be able to employ her in some way, at least for a time, till she heard of something permanent."

"Who is she?"

"I know little of her history. Her name is Morton."

"Where does she belong to?"

"To the county of Somerset, I believe, but to what part I am unable to say."

"Is she capable of doing anything?"

"Oh! she is a young woman of good education."

"What does her education consist of?"

"She understands music, French, drawing, &c."

"She is an impostor, Mrs. Wallford. You may depend upon it, she is an impostor."

"Why should you suspect her of being an impostor?"

"A person who comes to you in so strange a manner, destitute of friends and relations, and who professes herself conversant with these branches of education, can be neither more nor less than a downright impostor, Mrs. Wallford."

"I assure you, Mrs. Clavering, that you are altogether in error. I am convinced of it. In the first place, she is recommended to us by a person in whose honour and veracity every reliance may be placed; in the second place, her manners are evidently those of a person of good education; and lastly, since her short stay with us, she has given us opportunities of judging of her proficiency in these branches of education."

"Has she filled any situation in London?"

"Not that I am aware of."

"How has she hitherto subsisted?"

"As I have already said, I am but imperfectly acquainted with her history. I, however, suspect, though I do not wish it to be mentioned again, that the life she led in London has not been altogether free from guilt. She appears, however, to be penitent, and if I can by any means

assist the work of reformation that has begun, I shall rejoice exceedingly."

"It's just as I suspected, Mrs. Wallford, the girl is an impostor—a person who has led probably the most immoral life in London, and under the pretence of sincere penitence, comes down into the country with her artifices and falsehoods. I have not the least doubt in my own mind that she is an impostor."

"She is no impostor, depend upon it, Mrs. Clavering. I have never asked her to disclose her history to me, but I have no doubt, if I were doing so, she would tell me every circumstance, and make a free confession of any indiscretion of which she may have been guilty."

"You are too credulous by half, and I think that you have done very wrong indeed in allowing a person of that description to remain under your roof. How easily might she corrupt the morals of your son or your daughter."

She will never attempt to do anything of the kind. I place the utmost confidence in her integrity. However, I must come to the purpose. I have stated exactly under what circumstances the young woman has become a temporary inmate of my house, and the object I had in view in calling upon you to-day. Can you in any way assist her? I feel persuaded she is deserving of your consideration."

"For the present I must decline saying anything in the matter. I must be first convinced that she is an object worthy of sympathy before I can undertake to assist her. You know, of course, Mrs. Wallford, our standing in the town, and how very necessary it is that we should be guarded in anything we do. If I were recommending the young woman to anybody, and she was turning out to be what I have predicted—viz., an impostor—just conceive what a very unpleasant situation I should be placed in."

"I wish you to do nothing for the young woman upon the faith of what I say. Since you refuse, I must make an application in some other quarter, for the poor girl must not be left to starve."

As Mrs. Wallford said these words she rose from her seat, and the interview was thus terminated. When she had taken her leave of Mrs. Clavering, she began to think over in her mind the names of the persons most likely to assist the unhappy girl. After she had ruminated upon the matter some time, she determined upon calling upon Mr. Crumbledust, and conversing with him upon the subject.

Arrived at the residence of that gentleman, he received her, as indeed he was accustomed to receive everybody, with the greatest kindness and affability.

"What has brought you here, Mrs. Wallford, eh? It's not often, ma'am, I have this pleasure—not often, I say."

"It's rather an unpleasant business," Mrs. Wallford said.

"The deuce it is—unpleasant, eh?"

"Yes, and if you can render me any assistance, I shall be deeply indebted to you."

"Well—well—we shall see. What is it, eh?"

Mrs. Wallford related to the old gentleman the circumstances under which the young woman in question had called upon her on the preceding night, and every other matter connected with the subject.

"Poor thing—poor thing!" said Crumbledust. "How old is she, ma'am?"

"Not much above twenty, I should say, from her appearance—a most accomplished person, capable of teaching French, music, drawing, and I don't know what besides."

"Pooh! pooh! Mrs. Wallford. The girl's head is stuffed with nothing but nonsense, I fear, if that be the case. Is she able to teach plain things?—that's the question."

"I should fancy she was."

"Perhaps, then, I may be able to do something for her. The fact is, Mrs. Wallford, I have long contemplated establishing a school of my own in this place, where a certain number of boys and girls may receive a gratuitous education. I have been long disgusted with the changes that I have seen introduced into the system of education during the last thirty years, and I am sorry to say that the changes, in no single instance, appear to be for the benefit of the rising generation. The utmost absurdity, I find, pervades the system. French, German, Italian are constantly taught in our polite academies (what a word!), and boys begin to read Greek and Roman history before they have been made in any degree familiar with the Bible. I find that drawing and dancing are regularly taught, and that accomplished masters are engaged in each of these departments to give instruction. These refinements are not altogether confined to the higher schools, but, I am sorry to say, that the humbler ones are, more or less, contaminated by the innovation. It is on this account that I have resolved to establish a school of my own in this town, which I shall regularly endow, and which shall be conducted upon a plain and straightforward principle. The dresses, the education, the manners of the children shall resemble those of our worthy ancestors of 1710 as nearly as possible. Yes, that shall be the standard at which we will aim."

"If you contemplate founding a school of the kind, Miss Morton would no doubt undertake to superintend the education of the girls; and I think, if she continues in her present state of mind, which I have no doubt she will, she will be well adapted for the office."

"I think she will answer for that purpose."

"It will be some time before you can make arrangements for commencing the school, I suppose?" said Mrs. Wallford.

"The scheme has been some time in contemplation, but is now, ma'am, nearly matured. I expect to obtain a temporary place for a school-room in the course of a few days, which will answer till a new building is erected."

They conversed now upon other matters, which do not at all bear upon the present narrative. Mrs. Wallford remained with the old gentleman upwards of an hour, and when the conversation was concluded, she hastened home with a cheerful heart to apprise Miss Morton of the probable success of her mission.

XXXIII.

THE DISCOVERY.

THE summer had advanced with its fruits and flowers. The trees and hedges are clothed in their richest livery. The laughing streams bound through the valleys, and leap from hill to hill as though they were imbued with the geniality of the season. The light air is vocal with the songs of birds. Wherever the eye wanders it is pleased with the objects it beholds. The smiling landscape, with its cool shades, beneath which the countryman is reposing, with the cattle grazing around him, reminds us of pastoral life.

Further on, we behold the white cottages with which the landscape is dotted, with their neat gardens, and the woodbine clustering round the latticed porch. Here the waving corn and the luxuriant meadow—there orchards and gardens, with trees well laden with fruit—arrest the attention. These and a thousand other objects peculiar to the season present themselves. And where is there to be found a more beautiful picture than an English landscape?

Miss Morton had now been a few weeks in the country. She was tolerably happy and contented, and appeared more anxious than ever to compensate by a virtuous life for the acts of indiscretion of which she had formerly been guilty. The school-scheme which had been suggested by the ingenious brain of Crumbledust, was fully carried into execution with the aid of the purse of that gentleman, and it affords us considerable pleasure to say that Miss Morton, as indeed the reader will have anticipated, received the appointment of schoolmistress to the establishment, and to which office a salary was attached which enabled her to live in tolerable comfort and ease.

A lasting friendship sprang up between herself and the members of the Wallford family, who, shortly after her arrival in Morlington, were made acquainted with the whole particulars of her history. At first they shrank from forming a connexion with one who during the last year or two had led such a dissolute life, but seeing her unfeigned penitence and the propriety which displayed itself in all her actions, and bearing in mind the respectability of her family and connexions, and her superior education, they overlooked the past and made allowance for the temptations that had been thrown in her way. In this, perhaps, they were wrong—at least according to the common conventionalities of society. They were charitable, however, and merciful—they forgave.

An intercourse of an agreeable description was, therefore, maintained between the Wallfords and Miss Morton.

It is difficult to convey an idea of the gratitude with which the heart of the poor, penitent girl was filled. Mrs. Wallford had acted the part of a mother towards her; and Kate could not have treated her with more kindness had she been her sister.

The portrait which hung in the Wallfords' sitting-room attracted one evening the attention of Miss Morton, and remarking what an excellent likeness of Kate it was, and how well it appeared to be finished, she had the curiosity to ask by whom it was painted.

"Is it possible," exclaimed Kate, with some surprise, "that mamma never told you by whom it was painted?"

"I never till this moment thought of asking," replied Miss Morton.

"I am surprised that you should have remained so long ignorant of the name of the painter. It is painted by Mr. Merton, and is accounted an excellent likeness."

"Merton!" said Miss Morton, in surprise. "Not the Merton whom I met in London?"

"The same."

"Indeed! He is a painter, then?"

"He was only an amateur when he was here; but he left this neighbourhood with the determination, I believe, of applying himself to painting as a profession."

"He has gone, no doubt, to Italy, with the view of making himself a master of the art."

"Such, no doubt, is his motive," Kate replied.

Since the night on which Miss Morton arrived at Morlington, the name of Merton had scarcely been mentioned by any member of the Wallford family. The subject now aroused in Miss Morton the greatest curiosity. The short acquaintance which she had formed with him had given her no opportunity of knowing aught concerning him. His personal appearance had not made an impression in his favour; but his generosity, his manliness, had excited in her breast feelings of the strongest sympathy. Was she not indebted to him for everything—for life—for station—for the comforts with which she was surrounded? The first interview which she had had with him was sufficient to show that he was not a person of an ordinary description. When she was in London, a feeling, instigated probably by the obligation under which she was to Merton, had arisen in her breast, which she strove as much as possible to check. Of what use was there of indulging such a feeling? She was worthless—she was nothing to him. He was young, generous, uncontaminated by vice. It was preposterous to suppose that he, a young man just entering upon life, ardent, full of hope, and his breast filled with high aspirations,—it was preposterous, I say, to suppose that he could have any feeling except that of pity for an outcast—a friendless and unfortunate girl, without home or station. These were the considerations that enabled her to suppress a feeling which, under other circumstances, she might have cherished. A variety of circumstances now tended to revive it. His kindness—his absence—the uncertainty of ever meeting him again—the talent which he possessed, and which she was capable of appreciating—and, above all, the suspicion that he had formed an attachment which had not been requited.

The disappointment which Merton had met with was known to none save the Wallfords and himself, and it is not a little to Kate's praise to say, that she desired both her mother and Fred to keep the matter locked within their own breasts.

So it happened that Miss Morton was on the most intimate terms with the Wallfords, and yet she was never informed of Merton's unsuccessful attachment. Kate was too sensible to make a boast of her triumph.

XXXIV.

THE DREAM.

For some months, Horncastle had been permitted to remain in his dreary mansion unmolested. The attack, however, which had been made upon him by Lindenberg, had compelled him to abandon all idea in future of keeping much money upon the premises. The solitary life which he led caused him to be almost forgotten amongst the inhabitants of Morlington, where he was very seldom seen. There was, however, a presentiment in the minds of most of the people that some terrible calamity would befal him; and although Horncastle had, perhaps, not a single friend in the town, yet they persuaded him to seek some other habitation for the approaching winter. I know not whether they were instigated by superstition, or they had some reasonable grounds for anticipating danger, but everybody seemed to be of the same opinion. The superstitious probably anticipated the danger to accrue from spiritual intervention, whilst the more sober might suspect that the loneliness of the situation—the miserly character of Horncastle, and his reputed wealth and his defenceless state, were all incentives to robbery and murder. The robbery which has been previously spoken of never transpired amongst the people, for Horncastle wisely conceived it to be the best policy to conceal the matter, lest it should lead others to make similar attacks.

Although Horncastle disregarded the advice that was given to him, it was evident (though he strove ever so much to conceal it) that the presentiments of the people had made a deep impression upon his mind. He endeavoured to appear cheerful and unconcerned, but his anxiety and fear were discernible by everybody with whom he came in contact.

There was one person who interested Horncastle a great deal. That was Lindenberg. He wished to track his vessel from port to port, and with this view had a paper containing shipping intelligence sent to him regularly from London. For some time he had been able to gain no tidings of the *Pfeil*. He had traced her to Genoa, but had not discovered that she had sailed from thence.

One day, towards the latter end of the summer, he called upon the Wallfords. He had not been at the house since he left. His pretext for calling was for the purpose of inquiring after Mrs. Wallford's health. His object was, however, altogether different. Unable to gain any intelligence himself of the *Pfeil*, he determined to ask Fred if he would look over the shipping-list which he knew Messrs. Worm, Grub, and Co. were in the habit of receiving, and which was not the same as that which was sent to him.

"How is Mrs. Wallford?" Horncastle inquired, when he found himself in their little parlour.

"I do not think any better, sir," Kate answered.

"I am sorry to hear it. Where is Fred?"

"He is at the office."

"When do you expect him here?"

"He will be here in the course of an hour," Kate replied.

"If you will permit me, I will remain till he comes. I should like to see him."

"There can be no objection to your remaining till he comes," said Kate, although she would have preferred him to call again.

Kate requested him to excuse her, as it was necessary for her to attend to her mother, who was confined in her room up-stairs. The old man was, therefore, left in the room alone.

When Fred came home after the business of the day was over, he found, to his great surprise, Horncastle seated in the sitting-room. Horncastle rose on his entrance.

"You will be a little surprised to find me here, Mr. Frederick, I dare say," said Horncastle.

"I am a little surprised, I confess, Mr. Horncastle."

"I understood your mother was very ill, and I have been inquiring of Miss Kate after her health."

"She is very ill indeed," said Fred.

"I believe, sir," pursued Horncastle, "that the firm whom you serve are in the habit of receiving a shipping-list from London?"

"They are," said Fred.

"I suppose you will have an opportunity of seeing it?"

"To be sure I have."

"Do you see it regularly?"

"Almost every day."

"Are you aware whether a vessel called the *Pfeil* has sailed from Genoa during the last few weeks?"

"I have paid no attention, sir, either to vessels arriving at, or sailing from, that place."

"Will you be kind enough to obtain me the information?"

"If you wish it, I will do so."

"I will thank you if you will. When shall I call again?"

"To-morrow evening, if you think proper."

"I will do so. Good night."

The old man called again at the Wallfords, as he had been directed. Although, however, Fred had examined the whole of the shipping-lists they had received during the last month, he could find no vessel bearing the name of the *Pfeil* having sailed from Genoa. Horncastle appeared disappointed; but he thanked Fred for the service he had rendered him, and having again asked after Mrs. Wallford's health, he took his leave.

As Horncastle was passing the house of an individual who has already been brought under the notice of the reader, and whose adventures at the Old Hall will still be fresh in his memory, he was stopped and called in. Broadface's countenance turned very grave the moment he beheld the miser.

"Hoo d'ye dea, Maister Horncastle?"

"I'm very well, thank you."

"Ise reeght glad to hear't. Sit 'ee doon a bit, mun, will 'ee?"

"I am anxious to be at home," Horncastle replied. "Unless you have some business with me, I can't stay."

"I ha bisness wi thee, mun—serious bisness. Sit 'ee doon, I tell 'ee."

Observing the ominous looks of Broadface, and conceiving that the man had really some business of importance with him, Horncastle did as he was desired.

"Be as quick as you can, Mr. Broadface, as I have some distance to walk, and the night is very dark."

"It be vera dark, Maister Horncastle, and thou has but a sorry pleace to goa to.—Thou and me has niver been vera good friends," Broadface pursued, after a pause, "and thou has but an ill neame in t' pleace. I b'lieve thou hasn't got syke a bad neame without desarving on't, for I ha hard as how thou behaved but vera badly to the poor wider Wallford and t' family, and they be as nice folk as iver brok bread. However, that's neither here nor there. Although folk dea tell strange stoeries aboot thee, and say as how thou beest a miser and a misanthroper, which I hear is a koind of genteel expression for man-hater, still thou beest made o' flesh and bluid, though mayhaps thou hasn't the proper feelins of a man. Well, as I was a saying, though I know thou has a bad heart, and a bad neame, yet I think, if so be I can dea thee a koindness, I will for all that, mun. Ben Broadfeace will not stick at helping either friend or foe if he nobbit ha the chance."

"What is all this about?" Horncastle inquired, impatiently. "I do not understand what you mean."

"Then I'll come to the point at once, and be plain wi thee, Maister Horncastle. Thy life be in danger, mun."

"My life!" exclaimed Horncastle.

"Aye, and thou had better be careful o' thysel."

"How do you know that my life is in danger?"

"There be more folk besides me o' that opinion."

"What do you mean?"

"I ha told thee thy life be in danger. The neeghts be now getting long and dark, and if thou stayest in that auld house ower the winter by thysel, I wouldn't give twopence for thy life."

"Pshaw! I have nothing to fear from anybody," replied Horncastle.

"Thou has much to fear. I wouldn't ha so much to fear as thou for all thy wealth; nay, marry, for all the wealth in the world."

"By foreboding me so much ill, and seeming so positive of the fulfilment of your prophecy, I am almost tempted to believe that you will take a part in the mischief that appears to be hatching against me."

"Me ha ony hand i' the matter, Maister Horncastle! God forbid, mun, that I should be a murderer. Nay, nay, Ben Broadfeace beant sae bad as that, neither."

"Speak plainly. Have you any grounds for supposing that mischief is intended me?"

"In the first place, I ha told thee not to stay any more in that auld house—it beant seaf. I ha told thee afore what I ha seed there mysel, and mayhap (if thou has not been troubled wi 'em already) thou may receive some visits from the ghosts and goblins with which the rotten auld pleace is haunted. If thou beant troubled wi the ghosts, thou mayst be troubled wi summat worse. There be plenty o' bad folk aboot the neighbourhood, and it is thought thou beest very rich. Therefore be on thy guard, Maister Horncastle. My warning is for thy own good, and if thou doesn't heed it, thou'lt rue the day, I'll be bound."

"Are these your only reasons for the advice you have given me?"

"No; I ha yet stronger reasons."

"What are they?"

"Maybe thou will call what I'm a going to tell thee foulishness and nonsense, but it seems to me to be worthy thy consideration, and to ha been sent by Him above to warn thee o' thy danger."

"Come, be as quick as you can. The time presses, and I wish to be away."

"Dost b'lieve in dreams, Maister Horncastle?"

"No."

"Then I need not tell thee what I was going to say."

"Yes, let me hear it. Although I am no believer in these foolish superstitions, I have heard of dreams that have sometimes come true."

"I ha hard o' mony that ha come true."

"Well, well—proceed."

"Listen, then, to what I am going to tell thee. It'll be a week to-neeght, that being a little tired loike wi ower-hard work, which is vera offens the case wi me, I can tell thee, for I ha to work vera hard for my living—being tired, I say, wi my work, I went to bed a little sooner than I generally dea. I seldom goes to bed afore nine, but I went at ight on the neeght I speak aboot. I wasn't long in falling asleep, but I tossed aboot all the neeght in the greatest agony, and the sweat poored from my brow as if I was working a hard day's work. I was reeght glad when I wakened to find that I had nobbit been dreaming, but it was the most awful dream I iver had in my life. I thought I was walking one neeght atwixt the long rows of trees that lead to the Old Hall. It was a dreadful neeght, and the rain poored doon. The wind whistled and roared amang the bows of the trees, and as it careered past, some o' the rotten trees fell doon at my feet. The storm was so bitter, that I hurried on as fast as I could. I was going to the Old Hall on bisness, but I can't say exzackly o' what natur. There was nobody wi me, and I felt besides very dull and lonely, for I was much afeard that some ghost would pop out o' the hollow trunks o' the trees, and frighten me out o' my wits. I beant a coward, neither, Maister Horncastle, but there need be nothing odd o' a man dreaming o' being afeard o' walking along that dreary road that leads to the haunted house, for if ghosts ever did visit the earth, they ha been at the Old Hall, as certain as my neame be Broadfeace. Howsever, I walked on, though I more than once thought o' turning back, and putting off my bisness till it wor daylight. When I had got within a quarter of a mile o' t' house, I thought I saw summat dodging among the trees. It was a tall, dark figure, and loike a man. I walked on, and detarmined to watch, and mak out, if possible, what he was loike, though I was vera frightened. I somehow lost soight on him for a few minutes, but I again seed him amongst the trees, but he seemed to wish to escape my notice. When I reached the open space in front of the house I seed him again, for the last time. On seeing me he very likely hid hiesel behind the trees. I knocked at the gate several times, and at last an old man came out, with grey hair and a tottering walk. It was thou. I told thee of what I had seen, and recommended thee to leave the pleace, for if thou didn't, I said I thought thou would be murdered. I then told thee what I had seen as I came along, and said that I suspected the man was aiming at mischief. Thou shaked thy heed and smiled, and said, 'Tush, tush—nobody would harm an old man like me. No, no; I will stay where I am.' I tried again to make thee leave t' house, but wi no better success—thou seemed detarmined to stay, reason or nane, so I walked away again, and luiked around me on

all sides, but I could see nowt but the thick trees in the darkness, and hard nowt but the wind and rain. It was a bitter cold and uncomfortable neeght, and I wanted to be at whoam, so I walked on as fast as I could. When I had nearly gettin to the turnpike, a thought suddenly com into my heed. Thinks I, though it be syke a dreadful neeght, and though that auld fellow at the Hall be as obstinate as a mule, and a man that I doant vera well loike, still I think it beant Christian-loike—it beant altogether reeght to let him be murdered by that ruffian that I seed skulking 'mong t' trees; for I was dead sure that he was after no good. My heed being filled with these thoughts, I detarmined to go back again; sae I turned roond, and proceeded again in the direction of the Hall. As I went along, I kept my eyes constantly aboot me, to see if I could see anything, but there was nowt to be seen. When I got opposite to the Hall I stood a bit, not exzackly knowing what I should dea—whether I should kick again at the gate and ax to stay wi thee all neeght, or I should luik round the premises to see if ony bad karakters was there, and if I seed nane to goa once moar whoam. I decided, howsomever, first to look through the greet gate, and then act as circumstances might require. I stood at the gate for a few minutes, and I thought I saw a dim light gleaming across the court-yard, and I thought I heerd footsteps moving quietly along. I was mare alarmed than iver. I looked through the gate again, but I started back with horror, and for some seconds was deprived of all presence of mind. I saw——"

"What—what did you see?" exclaimed Horncastle, who had listened to Broadface with the greatest attention, and who was now greatly excited. "What did you see—speak——"

"I saw the figure of a man with a lantern in his hand."

"It was me," said Horncastle, mistaking for a moment the dream for a reality.

"No, it was not thee. It was a man some six feet high; his hair was dark, and hung in curls doon his cheeks. He was going towards the hall-entrance. He wore a belt round his waist, in which was stuck a small polished blade. It was a dagger."

"A dagger!"

"Yes. I did not know what to do. There was no time to get into t' house to save your life, so I knocked at the gate and began to shoot. The effort wakened me. I was gay and pleased to find that it were broad day, and that I had been dreaming."

"It was a shocking dream, indeed," said Horncastle; "but dreams foreshadow nothing. Pshaw!—mere childishness. They interest silly girls—not men."

"But I ha not telled thee all, Maister Horncastle. I ha dreamed the dream three neeghts running, mun."

"You have had something for supper that has disagreed with you, Mr. Broadface; that is the only way to account for such frightful dreams."

"I niver tak no suppers, but a basin o' milk and a piece o' bread, and Ise warrant that'll disagree wi nobody."

"It's a folly to give way to those foolish superstitions, Mr. Broadface. It is a fault to which I find the people in this neighbourhood too prone."

"It may be feulishness, or it may not," said Broadface. "At ony rate, I would ha thee to be on thy guard."

"I am obliged for your counsel," said Horncastle, rising from his seat and making a movement towards the door.

"Before thou goes, Maister Horncastle," said Broadface, laying his huge hand upon his arm and detaining him, "I advise thee once more to be on thy guard—to leave that terrible house which folk say be in the possession of the Prince of Darkness. Thou be nothing to me, and I be nothing to thee, but once more, I tell thee to leave that pleace afore it be too late."

"Good night, Mr. Broadface," said Horncastle. "I will give your advice due consideration."

XXXV.

THE DEATH-BED.

Poor Mrs. Wallford's indisposition had continued during the whole summer and autumn, and although there were seasons when she appeared to be tolerably healthy and strong, and capable of going about as though she were in possession of robust health, yet those symptoms were not regarded as favourable by Dr. Dawdle, who was apprehensive that the poor lady was fast sinking into a decline. About the latter end of the year, however, it became evident to everybody that a crisis to her malady would soon arrive. Mrs. Wallford felt conscious herself that her sojourn in this world was fast drawing to a close, but she was already reconciled to her fate, and looked forward to the change with a degree of cheerfulness and fortitude which none but the humble Christian experiences. For the sake of her children, Mrs. Wallford might probably have wished that she had been permitted to remain with them for a few years longer, but as Providence had seen fit to order it otherwise, she murmured not at the dispensation, but was abundantly consoled by the conviction that everything was for the best.

"Fred, my dear," said Mrs. Wallford one evening, as she and her children were seated together in the sitting-room, "when I am removed from this scene I hope you will look to your sister Kate. You must remember that you are the only one to whom she can look for a protector; and although you are yet not able to do much for yourself, yet you have good prospects before you, and in a short time you will have completed the term of your servitude. I feel assured, that if you continue to give Messrs. Worm and Grub satisfaction, they will retain you in their counting-house at a handsome salary."

"Do not, dear mamma," said Kate, "talk in this desponding way. I hope you will be spared to us many years yet."

"No, my dear child. It is of no use our deceiving ourselves. I feel assured I shall not be with you long."

"Perhaps, mother," said Fred, "a favourable change may take place. I hope it may, I am sure. But if anything really does happen to you"—and here the poor lad's eyes filled with tears—"I will always be a friend to Kate, and assist her as far as I can."

"I am glad, my dear boy, to hear you say so," Mrs. Wallford said.

"Whatever Fred can do for me, I am sure he will, mamma," said Kate. "We have always been kind and affectionate towards each other, and I hope we shall remain so."

"I hope, indeed, it may be so. Remember, my children, there will be plenty to quarrel and fight with you in the world, without your quarrelling with one another."

Mrs. Wallford frequently had conversations of this kind with her children, in which she invariably endeavoured to instil some good principles into their minds, or to give them advice which was to guide them in their career through life, when they were no longer able to avail themselves of a mother's watchfulness and instruction.

When, however, it was at length announced to the friends of the family that Mrs. Wallford would not live many days, the announcement was received in every quarter with the deepest sorrow, but with no great surprise, for her declining health for many months had prepared them for the intelligence. When the kind lady lay upon her death-bed, and when very few hours were expected to elapse before the vital principle would have fled, there were assembled in the room below several friends of the family. Mr. and Mrs. Clavering were amongst those assembled; and the quietness of their demeanour, and the gravity of their countenances, appeared to betoken the deepest sorrow at the change which was about to take place, and the most earnest sympathy for the irretrievable loss that the children were about to sustain. During the last two or three weeks, indeed, Mrs. Clavering had sent almost daily to inquire after Mrs. Wallford's health; and had at various times despatched by her servant jellies and grapes and other little delicacies which were likely to prove acceptable to her. She had also called at the house two or three times herself during that time, although she had not been there for some months before. Mr. Crumbledust and Mr. Pennifeather were likewise present. Kate, Fred, and Miss Morton were in the chamber above with Mrs. Wallford, who had just fallen into a gentle slumber.

"An excellent woman—an excellent woman," said Mr. Clavering. "I am afraid her loss will be severely felt."

"If she had been my own sister," said Mrs. Clavering, affecting to cry, "the bereavement could not have caused me more pain."

"I have known many excellent women," observed Mr. Pennifeather —"women who, whether in the character of mother, daughter, sister, or wife, have discharged the duties appertaining to each of those stations with the greatest honour and credit to themselves—women, indeed, who may be said to be the paragons of their sex, and to set examples which both old and young might follow with benefit to themselves,—but I may say with safety that I never knew anybody in the joint character of wife and mother excel the lamented deceased—excel, I should say, poor Mrs. Wallford. There is no man in England probably better able than myself to appreciate the excellent qualities of the English matron. I have seen her under every aspect—in poverty, in prosperity, in gaiety, in affliction. I have seen her engaged in her domestic affairs, and at leisure, and may, therefore, be said to be capable of pronouncing a judgment upon her merits. The late Mrs. Pennifeather possessed all the excellences of her sex—she was kind, faithful, industrious; a good wife, a good mother, a good daughter—indeed, exemplary in all the relations of life—and I am sure the poor lady, whose end is so fast approaching, might with truth say, 'If I were not Mrs. Wallford, I should like to be Mrs. Pennifeather.'"

"I am of opinion," said Mr. Crumbledust, "that we shall do very little good either for the children or for Mrs. Wallford by discussing at present the virtues of that lady; and it appears to me that they are occupying more attention now than ever they did at a former period of her life."

"Mr. Crumbledust," said Mr. Clavering, "who, sir, can have been blind to the inestimable qualities of the excellent woman in question? Who can have been so blind, sir, as not to have seen them years ago—years ago, Mr. Crumbledust?"

"It is not for me, sir, to mention names," said Crumbledust, "but I believe there are people who are gifted with a certain obliquity of vision as to the virtues of persons living, and who only begin to see straight when the persons are either removed, or about to be removed, by death."

"There may be persons," said Mrs. Clavering, "of the description you name, but I am sure, whoever they may be to whom you allude, I do not envy their feelings. The amiable qualities which distinguished Mrs. Wallford's heart, as well as those appertaining to her mind, were too conspicuous and too prominent to be overlooked for a moment."

"My own sentiments precisely," said Mr. Pennifeather.

"Yes," pursued Mrs. Clavering, "I repeat, there are few women like Mrs. Wallford. During the long intimacy which has subsisted between the families, I have had many opportunities of judging of her qualities,—and I say again, there are few like Mrs. Wallford."

"The poor will lose a generous helper," said Pennifeather; "for, although she was anything but rich herself, yet I know, for a fact, that notwithstanding that circumstance, she frequently distributed alms amongst the needy."

"And many will lose a friend," said Mr. Clavering.

"And some will lose a poor relation," said Mr. Crumbledust, *sotto voce*, "whose loss will never be felt."

Whilst the party assembled were thus discussing the various excellent properties of the poor lady, the termination of whose earthly sojourn was every moment drawing nearer and nearer its close, Dr. Dawdle arrived to see his patient once more. He called, however, not with the idea that he could be of any more service, but simply out of respect to the lady whose family he had so many years attended. When he entered the room where the company were, the doctor's countenance admirably became the occasion. Every feature was in subjection, and his gait and manner were strictly in keeping with the circumstances of the case. He no longer came skipping into the room as was his wont when things wore a different aspect, but he entered with a noiseless and measured step. He shook hands with Mr. Crumbledust and Mr. and Mrs. Clavering, and bowed with becoming dignity and gravity to Mr. Pennifeather.

"How is the poor lady?" inquired the doctor.

"She is not much altered, I think, during the last half hour," said Mrs. Clavering. "I was up-stairs a short while ago, and she had fallen into a slumber."

"Ah—indeed: she will not live over the night, I dare say. Poor thing—poor thing!"

The doctor proceeded as noiselessly as he could up the stairs. Miss Morton and Kate sat by the side of the bed, their eyes bent upon the

slumbering lady, whose countenance, though retaining all its sweetness of expression, was greatly emaciated by her long and consuming illness. Fred sat upon a chair at the foot of the bed: his handkerchief was pressed to his eyes—he was weeping.

"She sleeps, I think?" said Dawdle, in a low voice.

"Yes," answered Kate.

"Well, you must keep her as quiet as you can. It's a pity to disturb her, poor lady."

The doctor then crept down the stairs as gently as he could, and again joined the company in the apartment below.

"Does she sleep still, sir?" inquired Mr. Crumbledust.

"Yes," replied Dawdle; who almost immediately took his leave, promising that he should take an opportunity of calling the first thing in the morning. He had not been gone many minutes, when Miss Morton came down with a message from Mrs. Wallford, who requested to see Mr. Crumbledust.

"How long has she been awake?" inquired Mrs. Clavering.

"Not many minutes," Miss Morton replied.

"Perhaps I had better go up too," said Mrs. Clavering. "Can I be of any service, do you think, Miss Morton?"

"I am afraid not," said Miss Morton.

"Come, my dear, will you lead the way," Crumbledust said, "and I will go and see the poor lady."

"If Mrs. Wallford have any private communications to make to Mr. Crumbledust, perhaps I had better remain here for the present," said Mrs. Clavering.

"As Mrs. Wallford," said Miss Morton, "only requested to see Mr. Crumbledust, perhaps you had better do so."

Mr. Crumbledust being somewhat infirm, ascended the stairs with some difficulty. In his ascent, however, he was occasionally assisted by Miss Morton, who kindly rendered him all the aid in her power.

"Thank you—thank you, my dear," said Mr. Crumbledust, when he had reached the top. "I am not much accustomed, Miss Morton, to climb stairs like those, and if it had not been for you, I do not think I should have been able to climb them at all."

Miss Morton led the way to the sick-chamber.

"Ah! Mr. Crumbledust," said the sick lady, extending her attenuated hand to him, "I am glad to see you. Sit down, if you please. Kate, give Mr. Crumbledust a chair."

"And how do you feel yourself, my dear Mrs. Wallford?" inquired Crumbledust.

"I have no pain, thank God!" replied Mrs. Wallford.

"I am glad to hear it—very glad to hear it, my dear madam."

"I feel, however, that I have not long to live, Mr. Crumbledust, and as you have always been a friend to my family, both during the life of my husband and since his death, I sent for you to ask a favour. It will be the last I shall ever ask anybody."

"If there be anything, my dear madam, which I can do for you, you may instantly command me. There is nobody whom I would more readily serve."

"It was my knowledge of your kindness and benevolence that prompted me to speak to you upon the subject."

"Perhaps I had better leave the room," suggested Miss Morton.

"No, my dear, you may remain," said Mrs. Wallford. "There is nothing but what you may hear."

"I dare say, Mr. Crumbledust," pursued Mrs. Wallford, after a pause, "you will anticipate the subject upon which I am about to speak. It is the only one which binds me still to life. I allude to my children."

"I need not say, Mrs. Wallford," said Crumbledust, "that I shall be glad to carry out any projects which you may have formed concerning them."

"I have already spoken to both Fred and Kate upon the subject, and Kate seems desirous of obtaining a situation as a governess. Her brother, of course, will remain where he is."

"Well, my dear madam."

"What I request is, that you will do what you can to forward their views, and to give them such counsel as you may think that they, in their respective stations, may stand in need of."

"I will do for them whatever lies in my power, you may rest assured," said Mr. Crumbledust. "I am already attached to them, as you are aware; indeed, my partiality could scarcely have been greater if they had been my own children."

"God bless you—God bless you, Mr. Crumbledust. Your assurance is most consoling to me in my present situation. I shall leave the world with the conviction that my dear children will not be altogether without a friend and a protector."

"I pledge you my word, my dear madam, that they will not, so long as old Ephraim Crumbledust is living."

"And that he may long be spared to assist the friendless and the unfortunate, is my earnest prayer this night."

Mr. Crumbledust remained some time longer in the sick-room. When he withdrew, the tears were in his eyes—his parting interview with the poor lady had affected him greatly.

Mrs. Wallford lingered till the following morning, and when the light of day was beginning to illuminate the chamber—when the world was arousing itself from its slumbers—when people were preparing to set about their daily occupations, which had engaged their attention for so many years with scarcely any deviation—when the noise and the tumult were again beginning to disturb the silent streets, the good lady, surrounded by weeping friends and relations, sunk upon her pillow, and closed her eyes for ever upon the cares and anxieties of life.

XXXVI.

THE HOUSE OF MOURNING.

THERE is a solemnity about the house where the dead lay which we meet with nowhere else. The blinds are carefully drawn down, the domestics move stealthily about, as though they were afraid that the noise of their footsteps should disturb the tranquillity and repose which the

worn and tired wayfarer is at last enjoying, and there is a sadness upon their countenances which bespeaks the bereavement they have lately experienced. As you pass along the passage, as you ascend the stairs, as you enter the various apartments, what objects arrest your attention, and what trains of thought do they suggest. There hangs the hat of the deceased; in another corner of the room stands the silver-mounted cane of which the old gentleman was so proud. He will use neither again. You remember the cane since you were a child; when you were naughty, papa used to shake it as though he intended to lay it across your shoulders. When you became a man you envied the cane, and frequently used to beg the old gentleman to give it to you, which he nevertheless always declined, alleging that it had been presented to him by a friend who had been dead some years, and that he was determined to keep it in remembrance of him, and not to give it to one who did not know its value. This, no doubt, irritated you a great deal; but somehow you overlooked it, and gave the old man credit for his veneration. It is thus that these objects awaken a peculiar train of thought, and carry us back very frequently to the earliest periods of our existence, and present a series of events, with all their attendant circumstances, which might otherwise have sunk into oblivion.

The dead themselves are not less suggestive of reflection. There they lie so tranquil, so still. The countenance is composed and placid—no angry expression renders it repulsive—death has stamped it with his own peculiar seal. What thoughts arise—what upbraidings—what remorse! Have you at some period of your life caused that mother pain and annoyance by some hasty word, by some rash deed, by some obstinacy or waywardness of disposition? Have you, I say, by any inconsiderate conduct upon your part, caused her, perhaps, to weep or be sad? The circumstance quickly arises to your mind, and fills you with the most poignant grief. The prostrate figure, the tranquil countenance, are before your eyes. They fill you with remorse, with shame. She is there, helpless and still; she will suffer no more by your misconduct: she is alike beyond the reach of your ingratitude or affection.

I know not whether either Kate or her brother were troubled with any of these reflections, as on the morning upon which Mrs. Wallford died they stood gazing upon her tranquil countenance, upon which sat a pleasant smile such as she sometimes wore in life. Fred's arm encircled the waist of his sister, and whilst they stood with their eyes fixed upon the face of the dead, they appeared to be conscious that a friend had been taken from them whose place none could fill.

When the funeral was over, which was as private and as inexpensive as possible, a question arose as to what Kate and Fred were to do for the present. Some time must necessarily elapse before they could get rid of the house, unless they were fortunate enough to meet with a person who would take it off their hands.

Mr. and Mrs. Clavering were evidently somewhat hurt in consequence of Mrs. Wallford not having consulted them as to the future prospects of her children. Whilst, however, on the one hand, their pride was wounded because their advice had not been sought, on the other, they rejoiced that they had been released from the charge and the responsibility.

Mr. Crumbledust, who had perceived their dissatisfaction at the course

which Mrs. Wallford had thought proper to adopt, deemed it necessary, as a mark of courtesy, to call upon them and consult with them as to the arrangements that should be made, reserving, however, to himself the right of rejecting anything they might propose, in case he conceived it to be detrimental to the welfare and interests of the children.

Accordingly, a few days after the funeral, the old gentleman paid them a visit. After some preliminary conversation, Mr. Crumbledust opened his mission by saying:

"My dear Mrs. Clavering, as both you and your husband are so closely connected with Mrs. Wallford's children, I have conceived it necessary to consult with you as to the plans that should be formed respecting them. It was poor Mrs. Wallford's particular wish that I should look to their welfare, and forward any projects that appeared necessary for their happiness and interests."

"I am sure, Mr. Crumbledust," said Mrs. Clavering, "Mrs. Wallford has done quite right in appointing you as a guardian of her children, for I know no person who would be more ready to act in a case of the kind. I do think, however—though I by no means wish to speak disrespectfully of the dead—I do think, I say, that Mrs. Wallford ought, at least, to have consulted us herself upon this subject. There are none, I think, who had a better right to be conferred with."

"Well, madam, I do not know what Mrs. Wallford ought, and what she out not, to have done. I have simply thought it my duty to consult you upon the subject, and I shall be glad to be favoured with your assistance in the matter."

"Whatever disrespect Mrs. Wallford may have shown to us in the matter, Mr. Crumbledust, I assure you we shall not feel less anxious for the welfare of the children; and if there is anything we can do to forward their interests, I need not say that both Mr. Clavering and I will exert ourselves to the utmost for that purpose."

"I think, Mrs. Clavering, you are already aware that Kate will gladly take a situation as a governess, if she can obtain one. She is a clever and accomplished girl, and will, no doubt, be able to fill a situation of the kind with credit to herself and satisfaction to her employer."

"She is a very clever girl," observed Mr. Clavering—"a very clever girl indeed."

"The young woman has very respectable talents, I believe," said Mrs. Clavering, "but I do not know whether she would be capable of filling a situation of that kind in the families of the higher classes, where so many acquirements are necessary—French, Italian, music, singing, drawing, and I do not know what besides."

"I think you already know my sentiments, madam, with respect to these accomplishments," said Crumbledust, "and it is therefore useless our discussing them. Miss Wallford's acquirements, however, although they are not those that I admire very much, would, I think, be capable of recommending her to any respectable family."

"I have no doubt," said Mrs. Clavering, "she will be quite capable of acting as a governess in any of the families of the middle classes; but, as I said before, I do not think her sufficiently accomplished to act in that capacity to the children of the aristocracy."

"Well, well, madam, you may be right. I do not know, and shall not

pretend to argue the point. I suppose you approve of the young woman's intentions?"

"Most certainly I do," said Mrs. Clavering.

"Highly creditable to her, I think," observed Clavering. "Very commendable of any person who wishes to be independent of friends."

"And of relations in particular," thought Crumbledust.

"Fred will remain, I suppose, in his situation?" said Clavering.

"Yes," Crumbledust replied. "The house we propose to let as soon as we can find a tenant, and to sell all the furniture with the exception of the few articles that the children seem desirous of keeping."

"Ah! there can be no objection to that—no doubt the best plan," said Clavering.

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to detail all the conversation upon this point. The reception that Mr. Crumbledust met with was much more courteous than he had been led to expect; and when they pressed him to stay to dinner, that gentleman was constrained to accept of their invitation.

XXXVII.

THE FULFILMENT OF THE DREAM.

The interview which old Horncastle had with Broadface had left a deep impression upon the mind of the former. Though he was by no means superstitious, and had been in the habit of ridiculing the opinions that prevailed respecting the Old Hall, still the remarkable dream which had been narrated to him had inspired him with the greatest alarm. It was odd that the man should have dreamed the same dream for three successive nights; and what was still more singular, the appearance of the person whom he had seen in his dreadful vision bore a close resemblance to that of Lindenberg. He was a tall man, his hair was dark, and hung in curls about his face. Horncastle, after he parted from Broadface on the night we refer to, reflected upon the matter. The night was thick and dark, and not a star was to be seen in the heavens as he proceeded towards his solitary abode. As the old man hurried through the streets, some of the passengers whom he met would turn round when he had passed them, and say, "There goes old Horncastle the miser." Others would express surprise at seeing him in the town, and especially at so late an hour of the night. Horncastle heard some of their observations as he passed, but he took no notice, but pressed on as hard as he could, for he was anxious to be at home.

At length he gained the avenue leading to the Hall, and strode quickly along it. His thoughts still dwelt upon the interview which he had had with Broadface, and he tried in vain to shake them off. They incessantly, however, haunted his mind, do what he would. Since the attack which had been made upon him by Lindenberg, he had begun to conceive that his retreat was not quite so safe as he had formerly anticipated. The conversation he had had with Broadface, and the warnings which he had received from other quarters, tended greatly to increase his fears. He was not naturally a coward, but his heart began to quail, and misgivings to enter his mind. As he passed along the avenue he frequently turned round to see if he were pursued, and twice he mistook the trunk of an

old tree for a human figure, and which occasioned him the greatest trepidation. He gained at length the house, but his heart was heavy. He lit his candle and proceeded along the passages, and inspected minutely every apartment. When he had satisfied himself that there was nobody concealed within the walls, he returned to his room, and taking from a closet some pieces of dried bread and beef, which had lain there till they had almost become mouldy, he proceeded to make his supper off the fragments. He did not eat, however, with his usual appetite, and he was obliged to place a portion of the food again in the closet.

He looked out of one of the windows, but the darkness was so intense that he could see nothing but the dim outline of the trees that skirted the road which led to the Hall. He closed the window, carefully fastened his door, and retired to rest.

He awoke in the morning little refreshed by his slumbers; he had tossed about the whole of the night in a restless and uneasy manner. That day he looked carefully over his shipping-list, to ascertain if the sailing of the *Pfeil* was as yet registered in its pages; but he was again doomed to disappointment. He called upon Fred, and asked him if he had any tidings of the vessel, but he received an answer in the negative. He walked away greatly dejected and disappointed. It was strange that the sailing of the vessel had not been notified in either of the lists, for it was scarcely possible to suppose that she could be still lying at Genoa.

Day after day passed away, and still he received no tidings, and began to fear that he had lost trace of her altogether. Was it possible that by some cunning manœuvre of Lindenberg the vessel's name was not suffered to appear amongst the lists of sailings? He knew Lindenberg to be equal to any stratagem; and if the vessel had already sailed, it was his interest to conceal the place of her destination, if that were possible, both on account of Horncastle and other individuals to whom he was indebted various sums of money.

As the spring approached, the impression which Broadface's dream had made upon the mind of Horncastle became gradually less painful, although it was not altogether removed. The weather, which was exceedingly gloomy—the length of the nights, and the solitude in which he lived—frequently threw Horncastle into the deepest despondency and melancholy. He nevertheless persisted in remaining in the house, in spite of the warnings which he continued to receive, both from Broadface and others. He had remained there over the most gloomy portion of the winter months, without being in the least degree molested or interfered with; and as the spring was approaching, he thought it was useless to think of removing. He had still not heard anything of Lindenberg, and he began to be of opinion, and indeed to hope, that his vessel and all hands might have been lost during the winter. There seemed to be some likelihood of this being the case, for there had been violent gales at sea, and a great many vessels in the Mediterranean and Baltic had been lost, or had suffered great damage.

One night, in the early part of the year, Horncastle sat alone in his chamber. His stove stood upon the hearth, with a few burning embers within it. The old man drew himself as close to it as possible, in order to receive from it as much warmth as he could. There was no candle burning in the room, which was almost in total darkness. If it was so

comfortless and cheerless within, it was still more so out of doors. The rain was falling in torrents—vivid flashes of lightning at intervals were seen in the distant sky, and loud peals of thunder rent the air with terrific sounds. As the storm proceeded in its violence, the old man continued in the attitude in which he has been described. He was more sad—more depressed than usual. He had been so all day, but he knew not the cause. It was not the storm, for he had witnessed storms more violent, and he had beheld them with comparative indifference. There was something weighing upon his mind, he knew not what, and his heart was filled with evil forebodings. His thoughts at length became so oppressive that he could not bear them. He paced up and down his apartment to endeavour to banish them from his mind, but it was to no purpose. He was wretched, and his heart smote him with unknown fears. Yet why those fears? Had he robbed—had he murdered anybody—had he injured anybody, either openly or secretly? Had he defrauded his creditors? No; there was no charge of the kind to bring against him. His conscience was untainted by any of these crimes—yet he feared. His heart appeared to whisper to him that evil was at hand.

Having thrown some old garments about him, he proceeded to the outside of the house, to see if anybody was lurking about. He returned, however, without having met anything to excite his alarm, and again entered his dreary room; but he was as restless as before, and paced backwards and forwards as he had hitherto done. There were moments in the old man's life when his thoughts were diverted to other objects than money—when, indeed, they were weaned altogether from temporal affairs, and were riveted on the spiritual and eternal. It is true these seasons were rare, but they did occur to him sometimes. How insignificant then appeared his treasures—how worthless the object he had had in view in hoarding them together. The past would rise before him, and heap upon his head a hundred reproaches. For what had he struggled—for what had he toiled—for what had he undergone so many privations? For money—money. He had made it his idol—he had worshipped it. It had day by day, and year by year, accumulated upon his hand; and yet he was not happier than before. He was solitary, friendless; he hated the world—he hated mankind. He placed little value upon life.

The night we speak of was one of those on which these serious reflections occurred to him. It was already eleven o'clock, and he was about to retire to rest. This was the only way he conceived by which he could rid himself of his thoughts and the despondency to which he had become a prey. If, happily, he could fall into a slumber, he should, perhaps, awaken in the morning greatly renovated both in body and mind.

Hush! there was a noise. The old man listened with breathless suspense. It was, perhaps, the wind howling amongst the trees, or the rain beating against the panes, or the worn-out casements shaking in their frames. For some minutes he continued to listen, but he heard nothing save the roaring of the tempest, which raged with unabated vehemence. He walked again a few times across the floor, and then suddenly paused, in the greatest alarm and consternation. His eyes

stared wildly about him, his limbs trembled violently, and he was scarcely able to support himself. He had again heard a noise, as though somebody were attempting the gate. What could it portend? A thought flashed across the mind of the old man. It was Lindenberg; he had returned with his vessel to England. He wanted money—he wanted his life, for he knew that he was not safe in this country whilst Horncastle could at any moment appear against him. The old man was greatly agitated. What was he to do? Whither was he to fly? If it were Lindenberg—if his errand were such as he had divined, he possessed no means of appeasing him. Since the fatal night already referred to, he had kept, as we have already observed, little money upon the premises. When this circumstance became known to him, his anger would be ungovernable; and when he reflected that he was at the mercy of Horncastle whilst he remained in England, would it not occur to him that the only way to secure his own safety was by silencing Horncastle for ever? These thoughts rushed into the mind of the old man as he supported himself with his chair. He was deadly pale, and his whole frame trembled with emotion. He continued to listen; the uproar at the gate increased. He conceived at last that somebody was knocking, and begging for admittance. It had appeared to him, in the first instance, that he was endeavouring to effect an entrance by force. He could not, however, divest himself of the idea which had already taken possession of him. It was Lindenberg—it could be no one else. Who would come there and disturb him at that late hour of the night, and when a storm was raging with such violence and destruction?

The old man at length stealthily undid the fastenings of the door of his chamber, and noiselessly and with suspended breath crept along the corridor and across the court-yard. Here he paused to listen, hoping that he might be able to recognise the voice of the intruder. He stood for some minutes, but all was silent. The knocking at length was resumed, and a voice which he had heard before loudly begged him to open the gate. The voice was not Lindenberg's, and the discovery relieved his mind of a great deal of its anxiety.

"Maister Horncastle—Maister Horncastle!" shouted the voice.

At length it struck the old man that the voice was that of honest Broadface, whom he had met a few times in the town.

"Who's there?" inquired Horncastle, somewhat emboldened by the discovery.

"It be me—Broadfeace. Open the gate—quick. I ha got summat to tell 'ee."

Horncastle now no longer hesitated. He immediately shot back the bolts.

"What want you at this time of night?" inquired Horncastle. "I should have thought you would have been better abed than abroad at such a time."

Broadface's countenance was exceedingly pale, and he appeared to be greatly agitated.

"I would ha been abed, if it had not been on thy account."

"On my account?"

"Aye," replied Broadface. "Thou remembers some months sin a dream that I had?"

The allusion to the dream conjured up a host of fears in the breast of Horncastle.

"I do."

"I gave thee warning, and tould thee not to stay here, but thou did not regard my advice."

"Well, well, what has this to do with your present visit?"

"Why, it has this to dea wi it, that I had almost forgot the dream mysel till to-neeght, when I was in bed and was vera restless, and couldn't fall asleep, for there was a heavy weight upon my mind which I niver had afore, and which I could not understand. Then all at once the dream came into my head; and though thou beest no friend o' mine, and though it was such a fearful neeght, I determined to come and tell thee on't, and try if I couldn't persuade thee to leave the pleace."

Horncastle remained for a moment silent, and apparently absorbed in thought.

"These are foolish fears of yours, Mr. Broadface," he replied—"they are foolish fears. I thank you, however, for your advice; but where am I to go to-night—where am I to seek a refuge in such a storm as this?"

As they spoke together, a tree of gigantic proportions, which stood at the top of the avenue, was struck by the electric fluid to the ground, exciting in both Horncastle and Broadface the greatest alarm.

"It be the terriblest neeght this for certain that I ha seen for mony a day, but there be worse to come. Ise feerd there be great evil done this neeght."

"I hope the storm will abate soon," said Horncastle.

"There be summat warse than the storm to dreed," said Broadface. "I b'lieve thy life be in no danger o' that."

"What threatens my life, then?" inquired Horncastle. "If I have to fear nothing from the storm, from what have I to fear? You speak as if you knew more than you have told me."

"Dost remember that dream? I ask thee again."

"I do," said Horncastle; "but what of that?"

"Part on't ha kumd true," said Broadface, earnestly; and he kept his eyes fixed upon the face of the old man, to see what effect his words had produced.

"What part?" said the old man, incredulously.

"I'll tell thee. Thou remembers, maybe, that I dreamed in the first place that I had bisness at this house; that as I came along, it was a dreadful stormy neeght, and the wind howld through the trees, and the rain fell in torrents; that as I came up the road leading to the house, I thought I seed a dark figure skulking among t' trees; that I lost soight on him for a few minutes, and that I seed him again, and that I came to tell thee aboot it, and to advise thee to leave t' pleace. All this ha kumd true."

"What!" exclaimed Horncastle, "have you seen somebody as you came along the avenue to-night?"

"Aye, I tell thee, and what I seed bodes thee no good."

Horncastle stood for awhile in silence, absorbed in deep thought. A portion of the dream had been fulfilled in the minutest particulars. He had never before laboured under the influence of any superstitious feeling, yet there was something so earnest in Broadface's manner—something so strange and unaccountable in the circumstances that he had related to

him, that, despite his usual scepticism, he could not conceal from Broadface the deep emotion he had produced.

"It is very strange," at length said Horncastle, "but I hope that nothing will happen to me."

Although the alarm of the old man was quite apparent, yet it occurred to him that Broadface might be actuated by interested motives in persuading him to remove from the house. He appeared to be an honest fellow—but might this not be a deep-laid scheme for the purpose of plundering him of the little money he had in the house?

"Cum, mun," said Broadface, "put on thy hat, and cum away wi me to the toon."

"No; the night is too wet. I am an old man, and not strong. I should, perhaps, catch cold. I will remain where I am."

"I ha gien thee friendly warning," said Broadface; "but if thou be detarmined to ha thy own way, it be no fault o' mine."

"I thank you all the same."

"Then thou beest detarmined to stay?" said Broadface.

"Yes—yes. Good night," said the old man, as he was in the act of closing the gate.

"Good neeght to thee. If owt happens, there be nane but thysel to blame."

The rain at this time was pouring down as hard as ever. Broadface having, as he conceived, discharged his duty, felt considerably relieved, although he had not succeeded in inducing Horncastle to quit the house. He now bent his steps towards the town, anxious to reach home as soon as possible.

Horncastle, in the mean while, paced the floor of his room in a more restless state of mind than he had been in before. He struggled earnestly to dispel the dark thoughts which perpetually haunted his brain. There was a time when he would have laughed at these idle warnings and superstitions—there was a time when he would have treated those who poured them into his ear with contempt and ridicule; but that time had passed away for ever. He was now disposed to listen to communications of this kind, and to attach due importance to them. He was perplexed—he knew not what to do. If his life were in danger, whither, he again asked himself, was he to fly? Who would afford shelter to a man who had always shunned society, and from whose heart for many, many years all kind—all Christian feelings had been excluded? If his hour were come—if he had to die by the hand of an assassin—there was still somewhat of consolation left to him. His object had been achieved—that great object for the accomplishment of which he had for the last thirty years been quietly struggling. He had not lived in vain. He had not struggled in vain. He had not endured privation, misery, scorn, contempt in vain. No; his exertions had been crowned with success; his cherished project had been carried out, and there was little further worth living for.

Horncastle felt tired and fatigued, but before he threw himself upon his bed, he could not forego his custom of looking at the money which he had upon the premises, partly to gratify himself with the sight of it, and partly to satisfy himself that it was safe. To the cellar beneath he accordingly directed his steps.

XXXVIII.

THE MURDER.

BROADFACE, as we have stated in the previous chapter, having parted from the old man, walked along the avenue with the intention of returning home. When he had proceeded some distance, the rain began to fall less heavily, and he suddenly determined to return to the Old Hall, to try once more to persuade Mr. Horncastle to leave the place. He reached the house again, and approached the great gate. Before knocking, he placed his eyes to an aperture, and endeavoured to see through. God of Heaven! there was a light gleaming across the court-yard, and he heard footsteps stealthily moving about. He was alarmed, and the perspiration gathered upon his brow. He again placed his eyes to the aperture, and in a moment started back with horror, speechless and dumb. He had seen the full realisation of his dream: he had seen a man of tall stature with a light in his hand, and a dagger inserted in his waist, making quietly for the house—intent, no doubt, upon robbery and murder.

Leaving Broadface for a moment in his perturbation, we must follow the movements of the man, who was, indeed, no other than Lindenberg. He contrived by some means to gain admission to the house—he passed along several passages—he descended several flights of steps—he entered the vault below, where he discovered Horncastle counting over the money which he still retained in his possession. The cavity from which he had taken it was open, and the stone which was employed to cover it was laid upon the ground. He sprang forward before the miser had observed him, and drawing the polished blade from his belt, he stabbed him to the heart.

"Oh, God! I am stabbed," said Horncastle, fixing his eyes upon the assassin. "'Tis Lin—Lindenberg."

Life was extinct in a few minutes, and the murderer seized the body of the miser and threw it into the cavity amongst several pieces of gold which had fallen from Horncastle's hand when he was seized upon by Lindenberg. The latter placed the stone over the cavity, and catching hold of the miser's box with his hand, he contrived to effect his escape from a back part of the premises.

To return to Broadface. When he had recovered from his fright, he knocked loudly at the gate, thinking that the disturbance might arouse the vigilance of the old man, and apprise him that danger was at hand. He continued to do so for some time without anybody answering his summons; and apprehending that something of a dreadful nature had happened to the old man, he hastened to Morlington to report of the murder which he suspected had been committed.

An investigation into the matter was at once made. The house was searched, but Horncastle was nowhere to be found, and it was suspected that his murderer had in some way disposed of the body. The most active pursuit was immediately instituted for the purpose of capturing the assassin; and from the description that Broadface had given, and from other circumstances that had transpired, suspicion fell upon Captain Lindenberg, who was partially known in the neighbourhood. Search

was immediately made for him everywhere, but without success. He had been seen in England within the last few days, although his vessel had not been seen in any British port. There were persons sent upon the Continent in search of him, but no tidings whatever could be gained of the man; and whilst some thought he lay concealed in some obscure place in London, others were of opinion that he had proceeded to America.

Some days after Broadface had communicated his strange dream to Horncastle, the latter, it would appear, had again called upon Crumbledust, and informed him that he was busy drawing up his will, and asked him, if he should be his survivor, if he would consent to become his executor. It was evident that the old man had been instigated to this course by the interview he had had with Broadface. At first, Mr. Crumbledust declined the honour which was proposed to him; but Horncastle pleaded earnestly, and intimated that he should have no reason to regret having undertaken the task. It was by these means that Crumbledust ultimately complied with the request of the miser. Horncastle at once drew out a document, which he placed in the hands of Mr. Crumbledust, sating that, in the event of his sudden death, he appointed Mr. Crumbledust his sole executor, and that he was forthwith to take possession of his papers, effects, &c., and dispose of them agreeably to the instructions contained in his will. This document was signed by Horncastle, and witnessed by some of Mr. Crumbledust's servants. Horncastle intimated before he departed where his papers would be found, in case his death should occur under the circumstances referred to.

It was in consequence of this arrangement that Mr. Crumbledust proceeded after the murder to take possession of the property and papers that the late Mr. Horncastle had left.

The papers belonging to the deceased were numerous, consisting for the most part of letters—partly in German, partly in English. The will was enclosed in a large envelope, and sealed in several places with sealing-wax. Upon the outside of the envelope Horncastle had written the following words: "The last will and testament of John Horncastle. Not to be opened till twelve months after his death." Amongst the papers was also found a somewhat bulky MS. in the handwriting of the deceased; and which we shall presently lay before the reader.

The supposed murder of Horncastle had created a great sensation not only in the town of Morlington, but throughout the neighbourhood. The circumstances under which the murder had been committed—the remarkable account which Broadface had given both of his dream and what he had witnessed—the singular character of Horncastle, and his reputed wealth—all served to awaken an interest which, perhaps, had not been paralleled in that part of the country before.

Strange stories began to be circulated regarding Horncastle. Some said that the name was an assumed one—others, that it was his proper name, and that, having accumulated a large fortune in Germany, he had returned to his own country, partly on account of his attachment to it, and partly for the purpose of investing his immense wealth in English property. It was, however, expected that the mystery in which his history was involved would be cleared away, and that the papers which had fallen into the possession of Mr. Crumbledust would be sufficiently explanatory, and disclose full particulars as to the deceased.

The disclosure in question was, therefore, looked forward to with much anxiety. Mr. Crumbledust felt as great curiosity as most people upon the subject. A very short time was, therefore, allowed to elapse before he commenced the perusal of the document, which will be found in the following chapter.

XXXIX.

A MISANTHROPIST'S MANUSCRIPT.

THERE may be those anxious to know somewhat of my personal history after the vital spark has fled from this poor, weak tenement of clay —this shivering and decrepid body, decayed by suffering and disease. They know, peradventure, little of me, save that I was mean—penurious —wretched—that I dwelt apart from man—that I was morose, unkind, cynical in my disposition. They know not the extent of my delinquencies—they know not that I hated mankind with a deadly, an unquenchable hatred—that I would have made any sacrifice to compass the ruin of the whole human race. Oh! how often have I exclaimed with the famous Roman emperor Caligula, that mankind had but one neck, that by a single stroke the whole human family might be destroyed. It may be asked, could aught but a monster in human shape entertain such sentiments as these?—could aught but that arch-fiend, the Prince of Darkness himself, who has waged war with mankind for thousands and thousands of years, be actuated by so wicked and so unbounded a hatred? I answer, if there have been tyrants and scourges amongst men, there have been provocation and wrong. I answer, if men have been influenced by the malice and wickedness of devils, mankind have had themselves to blame. I was once kind and gentle. I never harmed a man by word or deed. I was generous—munificent. I gave too freely —I trusted too eagerly. I was deceived. Oh! how deceived. Words (impotent instruments) are inadequate to convey a suitable notion of my disappointment. Men whom in my rashness—in my ignorance—I had elevated into gods, fell in my estimation lower than the ministers and disciples of Beelzebub himself. The world had hitherto been a garden; it became a wilderness—a desert. I am anticipating. I must allow the narrative as it proceeds to develop the springs of action by which my whole conduct has been guided.

I am the only survivor of a family whose reputation, for more than two centuries, has been without taint or blemish—a family whose bravery and activity have rendered service to more than one sovereign, and which has always been foremost in endeavouring to ameliorate the condition and advance the general interests of mankind. Of that family, I say, I am the only survivor. With my death the race, I am happy to say, becomes extinct. If its name have been stained—if disgrace and obloquy have descended upon an escutcheon hitherto pure and immaculate, the fault be mine.

When the paternal estate fell into my hands, it was unimpoverished—it yielded an excellent revenue, and enabled me to associate, on terms of equality, with the first men of the district. There are men still living who will remember the magnificent dinners given by him who at this moment has scarcely courage to spend a penny in a roll of bread. They

will remember the dinners, I say—for fools and gluttons will remember an excellent feast for years—although their memory is frequently, on the other hand, so defective, that they will forget a service or favour that has been rendered them in as many weeks. There was no lack of aught at my house—it was what is considered an open house, and any gentleman who had the least claim to my acquaintance, conceived himself at all times entitled to an *entrée*.

I continued this course of life for a number of years, without ever asking myself whether I was acting prudently or otherwise, or whether my income justified my expenditure. *Experientia docet.* My eyes at length became open—I found that I was gradually impoverishing myself. Still I felt no inclination to retrench—still I continued in my mad and headlong career. What did I care? I was surrounded by every luxury—I was surrounded by jovial companions—pleasant fellows. They liked my society—I liked theirs. I was a kind of demigod amongst them, and they worshipped me. There was not a dinner or a ball in the county that I was not invited to. I was president and vice-president of I know not how many societies. No man was more popular—none more idolised. To retrench my expenditure was no easy matter. A custom of some years' standing is difficult to shake off. I did not, however, see the urgent necessity. I should never be suffered to want. I had too many faithful and excellent friends—men who esteemed it an honour to be allowed to associate with me—men who were under pecuniary obligations to me. Had I not frequently accommodated Sir John Trumperton with 100*l.* or 200*l.* when he was a little pinched?—had not Sir Cuthbert Widelands frequently availed himself of my assistance?—was not Lord Hopton indebted to me for sums of money when his account was overdrawn at the banker's? There were, besides, many other men whom I had befriended and accommodated when they were in need of help. If, therefore, I should ever be exposed to adversity, these men would almost rejoice at it, since it would afford them an opportunity of manifesting their gratitude for the many favours they had received at my hands. Thus I reflected, and thus I suffered myself to be plunged deeper and deeper into difficulties. I call Heaven to witness, that during the many years I was engaged in this shameful course, and surrounded by so many friends and admirers, there was not one to whisper into my ear that I was doing wrong, or to advise me to desist from a career which could only end in ruin and destruction. I said there was not one to whisper a warning voice in my ear. I was wrong. There was one—a wife whom I once tenderly loved, but from whom my jovial friends and companions assisted to estrange me. My wife gave me counsel, and forewarned me of what would happen, but I paid no attention to her predictions. I could not bear to hear these unpleasant things continually dinned into my ear. I forsook her society—I neglected her. I ceased to pay her that respect she was entitled to. What boots it to say what followed? She died—she lived not to see the fulfilment of her prophecies. They were fulfilled nevertheless. I was ruined. I had mortgaged my estate to the uttermost farthing, and I was left without a penny in the world. I still did not feel the real extent of my calamity. I had not lost all. I had friends—attached friends, who would not fail to come forward to assist me. One thing was evident. I must change my course of life—I must go

abroad for some years. An execution was put in the house, and the mortgagee seized upon the estate. There were certain articles of furniture which had been in the family for a great number of years, and which I felt a strong inclination to retain. I knew my friends would accommodate me with money for their purchase, and furnish me with the loan of a few hundred pounds for my present and future exigencies, till some plan should be adopted for my further maintenance. A short time before the sale of the furniture was to take place, I despatched the following letter by my servant to Sir John Trumperton, who resided only a few miles distant:

"My dear Sir John,—I shall make no apology for addressing to you the present epistle, and asking for your assistance in my present difficulties, with which you are no doubt already acquainted. I have so frequently had the happiness of obliging you, and you have so frequently on these occasions expressed your willingness to reciprocate the kindness when the opportunity should occur, that I am sure I have merely to represent my case to you as it is, to receive at once your hearty sympathy, and all the aid you are capable of rendering me.

"The fact is, my dear Sir John, that the sale of the furniture takes place to-morrow, and that there are a few articles which have been considered as heirlooms by the family, and which I would not willingly suffer to go out of my possession. If you can accommodate me with 50*l.* or 100*l.*, which I shall take the earliest opportunity of repaying you, for the purpose of purchasing them, and to supply my present wants, I shall esteem it an act of kindness for which I shall ever be grateful.

"Believe me, &c."

My messenger returned with the following letter from Sir John:

"My dear Sir,—The contents of the letter which I have just received from you have caused me the greatest surprise. I was perfectly ignorant of the unfortunate position in which you are placed, and I regret to say that your application to me at the present moment could not have been more inopportune. The truth is, my account is already overdrawn at Smith, Smith, Jones, and Smith's, and that two or three of my acceptances will be due in the course of a few days, and that at this moment I am quite incapable of meeting them. When I have stated this, you may conceive my situation, which in reality is little better than your own. It grieves me deeply to be compelled to refuse you anything—more especially assistance when it would have been of so much service to you; but in the present instance it is really unavoidable.

"With my best wishes for your speedy delivery from the unhappy dilemma in which you are placed,

"Believe me, &c., &c."

If my letter had so greatly surprised Sir John, his communication caused me indescribable astonishment. Was it possible that Sir John had written this letter to me? Was it possible that one of my best and most attached friends—a man whom I had obliged in a similar way fifty times at least—was it possible, I say, that he could refuse me the trifling

favour I asked? I knew that he was in a situation to grant me what I sought, and that was the reason that I had applied to him in the first instance. I knew that within the last few days he had received several hundreds of pounds from a gentleman for some property that he had lately sold him; and I likewise had heard, from pretty good authority, that his banking account had not been in so flourishing a condition for many years.

I was disappointed by Sir John's refusal, but it was not a matter of great inconvenience after all; for I knew several gentlemen who were both willing and able to grant me assistance when I should require it.

Shortly after the receipt of Sir John's letter I proceeded to Sir Cuthbert Widelands. He lived at that time at Sweet Briars. He shortly afterwards, I believe, removed from the neighbourhood.

"Good morning, Sir Cuthbert—how do you do?" I said, when I was shown into his presence.

"Ah! my dear fellow, how are you?" said Widelands. "To what good fortune am I indebted for this visit—eh?"

"Say rather to what bad fortune," I replied.

"Eh, eh—what do you mean?"

"It is impossible that you haven't already heard."

"Not a word—not a syllable, my dear fellow."

"Why, sir, it's known throughout the neighbourhood, and the leading subject of conversation everywhere," I said.

"Oh, that may be, but I am perfectly ignorant, I assure you."

"The fact is this, Sir Cuthbert—that there is an execution in my house."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Sir Cuthbert, in surprise.

"It's the case, I assure you."

"I am exceedingly sorry, my dear fellow, to hear it. It's a very unfortunate case, 'pon my soul. The only way, however, is to retrench—go upon the Continent."

"I have thoughts of adopting that plan," I replied. "The sale of the furniture takes place to-morrow, and as there are a few articles I wish to retain, I have made free to call upon you to ask for the loan of a few pounds, to enable me to purchase them."

"It's very unfortunate, my dear sir, very unfortunate, but a friend of mine was here only yesterday, to whom I lent all the spare cash I had in my possession. If you had called yesterday morning I should have accommodated you with pleasure, for you might as well have had the use of the money as he."

"Oh, if it's not convenient, it's not of any consequence, Sir Cuthbert. I have no doubt I shall get the money somewhere."

"A man like you, who has so many friends, will have no difficulty, I dare say."

When I parted from Sir Cuthbert I called upon Grigsby—a gentleman whose friendship I had enjoyed for a number of years, and who had been a frequent guest at my table. There was not a more jovial fellow in the neighbourhood than he was; and the suavity of his manners, and his remarkable flow of spirits, caused his society to be much courted. This gentleman was a solicitor in large practice, and his private and professional income combined was not much short of 3000*l.* a year.

I explained in as few words as possible my position to Grigsby, and my object in calling upon him. I was not much surprised by his answer, for when I entered his room I fancied he did not give me that cordial reception I was accustomed to receive from him. I fancied the smile upon his countenance, when I presented myself, was not so bland as it used to be, and that he did not press my hand with the fervor which characterised our previous meetings.

"Fifty pounds is what you require?" said Grigsby, after a pause, during which he appeared to be considering whether he should lend me the money or not.

"Yes," I replied.

"It's not a large sum, but I am a good deal pinched for ready money just now; but I will tell you what I will do. I will look over my engagements and resources, and if I can possibly spare it, I will send it to you to-morrow."

"I should have it to-day, Mr. Grigsby," I said. "The sale commences early to-morrow morning."

"The articles you speak of will, perhaps, not be sold to-morrow," he replied; "besides, if there be any chance of that, you can prevail upon the auctioneer to keep them back."

I was not blind to Grigsby's meaning. His reply was a refusal, couched in the least offensive terms. I took up my hat, and stiffly bowing to him, quitted his presence.

I made one more call. It was attended with the same result as the others. There were certain aggravating circumstances in connexion with it, from which the others had been exempted. Although the gentleman to whom I refer was at home—indeed, I saw him at the window as I passed—his servant informed me he was out of town, and was not expected to return till the morning.

I had seen enough—my eyes were opened. I had called upon nearly all my *soi-disant* friends in the immediate neighbourhood, whom I had obliged a thousand times, and who had assisted me to squander away my patrimony. I had called upon these men, I say, not to ask for a return of all the benefits and favours I had conferred upon them, but to ask for the loan of a paltry sum of money—a few pounds that they would have cheerfully lost at a race or spent upon a dinner. I was refused; and it was not too difficult to see that the friendship which had hitherto subsisted between us was at an end. And why should it not be so? I was a beggar—I had ruined myself by my extravagance—by the splendid entertainments to which I had invited these excellent friends. I was no longer fit for their society—no longer capable of supporting the splendour and dignity which became the station in life I had hitherto occupied.

When I went abroad, there was a marked difference in the conduct of men towards me. Fellows whom when I met in the streets used to touch their hats with all the obsequiousness of their cringing nature, now passed me without paying the usual tribute of respect; tradesmen who were in the habit of bowing to me in the most deferential manner, began to assume airs, and to set themselves up for men of consequence, and at least on an equality with, if not superior to, the descendant of an ancient but fallen house, a bankrupt—a man without present or future resources.

These were not all the humiliations and indignities to which I was exposed. Men who had formerly associated with me passed me in the street without recognising me—devised every possible means of avoiding me, and indicated as plainly as they could that my society was no longer agreeable to them.

I was surprised at the revolution which so short a time had effected. Whence this change? Was I altered?—had I committed some great crime against the regulations of society? I was struck to the heart—confounded. Instead of meeting with friends to sympathise, to condole with me, and to render me as much assistance as they were able, I met with nothing but silent rebuke and scornful reproach.

I became at once keenly alive to my position. I was degraded—a stain had tarnished the reputation of a family whose name had hitherto been spotless. I was irretrievably lost in the estimation of all that knew me, and could never hope to occupy again that position in the world which I had previously done.

For some days I was incapable of any decisive course of action. I was humbled—prostrated in spirit. I longed for death, and during this fearful period frequently contemplated suicide. I had walked out one day to take a last farewell of the fair domain which had been in the possession of our family for so many years, when suddenly a new spirit animated me—my pride was aroused. I revolted from a death which would only be an occasion of triumph for those that hated and despised me. No; I would live—live for one object, to which all others should give place—use every faculty of body and mind for its attainment—undergo any privation, any misery, which might conduce to its achievement. Yes, friendship—relationship—every tie of kindred and home—every link that bound me to the hated past, I would throw to the winds, and I would go forth alone—unaided. For me there should no longer be pleasure—no longer social enjoyment—no longer should feelings of love and pity and sympathy for mankind fill my bosom. No. I discarded them. Henceforth my life should be one of labour—incessant labour—earnest struggles—stratagems—anything—everything to attain the object I had in view. I roused myself from my weakness—from my lethargy; my heart was filled with the bitterest feelings of hatred—I cursed mankind—I cursed them in the bitterness of my heart. "Mean, despicable, ungrateful race," I exclaimed, "henceforth there shall be a barrier between you and me—henceforth there shall be no friendship on my side towards you—henceforth our pursuits, our enjoyments, shall no longer be of the same nature. No. The past shall be forgotten—one object alone shall engage my attention. I will struggle manfully—courageously for its accomplishment; and ere many years have elapsed, this mansion—these broad lands—shall again be in the possession of him who has squandered them away in riotous living." Oh! what joy filled my bosom when I had come to the resolution! I turned away with the full assurance that my object would be realised.

I ought not, perhaps, to omit to mention an act of kindness which I experienced at this time. It came from a quarter where I had no right to expect it, and was conferred upon me altogether from disinterested motives. I was passing through the town one day, where I had been on a fruitless errand to raise the sum of money for the purpose already

referred to, when I by chance met Mr. Wallford in the street: at that time he was living in splendid style, and extensively engaged in business. I was not very familiar with him, although I had met him twice or thrice before in company. He came up to me in a very friendly manner, and shook hands with me.

In the course of the conversation which we had together, the business upon which I had been so recently engaged transpired. He had no sooner heard that I was in want of a little money than he kindly proposed to lend me 50*l.* or 100*l.* till I could with perfect convenience to myself return it to him. This singular act of generosity made me think for a time less unkindly of mankind; but fresh provocations occurred, and I returned to my former sullenness of temper, and again the bitterest animosity filled my breast. Mr. Wallford supplied me with 50*l.*, the whole of which sum I spent in purchasing the few articles of furniture which I wished to retain in my possession.

I was left without a penny. The question that next occurred to me was, how was I to meet my present necessities? Was I to go again and ask for assistance where I had so lately been refused? Was I again to encroach upon the generosity of a man upon whom I had no claims, and who, perhaps, had a use for all the money he possessed? As these questions suggested themselves to me, I ground my teeth with rage—I took a solemn oath that I would starve rather than adopt either of these measures. I had health—energy; although I had lived freely, neither my powers of body nor mind were destroyed. Wherefore should I not work?—wherefore, indeed, should I not perform the duties of the lowest menial if that were necessary?—wherefore should I be exempt any longer from the toil and labour to which the great majority of mankind are subjected?

I fled the neighbourhood. I wandered for days and days in the fields and in the woods. I lived upon the berries which I plucked from the hedges, and sometimes I regaled myself with a turnip when the opportunity occurred. My food was coarse, but it was sweet. My appetite was not so dainty as it had been. I would rather have lived upon the food which is thrown to swine than have feasted at the choicest banquets, if the latter had placed me under the least obligation. Thank Heaven! poor, destitute, friendless as I was, I had a proper sense of my degradation—I had a proper sense of the injuries, the insults that I had received. I was not yet an imbecile—I was not a slave—a cringing, despicable coward, who would condescend to receive assistance, now, from the men who had formerly refused it. I was independent in spirit, and self-respect had not deserted me. If health were permitted to me, the patrimony of my ancestors should again be redeemed—every inch of the land which had been seized upon by my creditors should be restored to me. It was a mighty project, but it was a glorious one. I laughed with delight when I thought of it—I shouted—the air was filled with my boisterous merriment. Ha! ha! All—all shall again be mine, and I will yet see the day when I shall again be on an equality, if not superior, to the men who now despise me.

I hastened to London. The excitement—the misery which I had undergone during the two or three preceding weeks, brought on a fever. I raved upon a pallet of straw in one of the humblest lodging-houses

My life was despaired of by those who were around me. My malady, however, at length took a favourable turn, and by degrees I recovered.

It was now time to seek employment, but a difficulty at once presented itself. To what could I apply myself with any chance of success? The clothes which I wore when I arrived in the metropolis had been sold to defray the expense attending my illness, and I was now clad in the most wretched and humble garments. There was reason, however, for congratulation that they were so, for they would at least be a disguise, and prevent my recognition by any persons whom I might encounter in London. I lounged for days and days about the docks in quest of employment. Although I wrote a tolerable hand, and was a pretty good accountant, it was useless to apply for employment in a counting-house in my present condition; besides, by associating with the humbler class of men, there was less chance of my history being discovered, or my present humiliating condition becoming known to any of the aristocratic friends who had disclaimed me.

At last I obtained some temporary employment at the docks, by which I earned a few shillings. How delighted I was—in what an ecstasy of joy I pressed the money to my bosom! There were only a few shillings, but they were the fruits of my own industry—they were to be the foundation of my future wealth and greatness. I arose every morning as soon as it was light, and hastened to my post. Some days I was employed, and others I got nothing whatever to do. I remained till it was dark, whether I was employed or not. I lived in the humblest lodging, and upon the coarsest food; and although I was not employed half of my time, I began already to accumulate money.

A favourable circumstance occurred to me at length, which gave an important turn to my fortunes. During the period I attended the docks, I frequently saw there a gentleman from Germany, who was on a visit to England. He saw my regularity and industry, and one day he asked me if I would enter his service, and go with him to Germany. The proposal I acceded to with avidity. I accompanied him abroad, and at first discharged the duties of warehouseman in his employ. He was a merchant, and extensively engaged in exporting German produce to various parts of Europe. My regularity gave satisfaction, and my employer, anxious to give me encouragement, advanced my wages, and by other acts of kindness intimated his pleasure at the manner in which I discharged my duties. I had not been long in his employ, when he discovered that I was capable of acting in a superior capacity. I was, therefore, promoted to the counting-house, and in time became head clerk, and afterwards a partner in the firm. When my patron died, the whole of the business devolved upon me, and I conducted it for a number of years with the greatest success. During all this time I lived in the meanest way, clothing myself in the humblest garments, and subsisting upon the coarsest and cheapest of food. By this incessant parsimony I had accumulated a large sum of money, which every year was increasing with the greatest rapidity.

It was whilst in Königsberg (my place of residence) that I became acquainted with Captain Lindenberg. I knew he was a reckless and vicious man, and that his trade, for the most part, was of an illicit and dangerous description. I had, however, made large sums of money by

him. I had lent him money at the most usurious rates of interest, and I had sold him goods fifty per cent. higher than he could obtain them elsewhere. Somehow this man became acquainted with my history, but in what way I was never able to ascertain.

When I had accumulated sufficient money (if it was possible for one of my grasping disposition to accumulate sufficient), I disposed of my business and returned to England.

My residence with Mrs. Wallford, and my purchase of the estates of my ancestors (for you will already have anticipated that I am Sir Luke Mortimer), are already known.

On my arrival at the Old Hall, I discovered in the "Tapestried Chamber" a great portion of the furniture which Mr. Wallford had kindly assisted me to purchase. I had desired it to be deposited in another place, but my instructions, it would appear, had not been obeyed.

When I returned to this country, I found that nearly all my former friends were dead; there are a few, however, who survive, and who no doubt still remember me.

It was thus I lived to carry out a project which for years and years had occupied my mind.

XL.

THE GREENWELLS.

Mr. Crumbledust's interview with the Claverings, with respect to the situation that Miss Wallford was desirous of obtaining, not having ended so satisfactory as he could have wished, he determined to consult with Dr. Dawdle upon the subject. Dawdle was a respectable man—had a good practice—was much respected in the place, and in all respects likely to forward his views in the matter.

Therefore, on the first opportunity that offered, the old gentleman called upon Dr. Dawdle and introduced the subject, and requested all the assistance that he could render him.

"Of course, my dear sir, I shall do all in my power," replied Dawdle, when Mr. Crumbledust had stated the object of his visit, "to assist you in the affair, for Miss Wallford is a very fine girl, and one for whom I have every respect."

"I knew you would," said Crumbledust; "but do you think there are any of your friends or acquaintance who are at present in want of a young person of her description?"

"Why, at this moment I cannot say that there are, but I'll inquire—I'll inquire."

"Do so, sir," said Mr. Crumbledust, "if you please."

"I'll tell you what, sir," said Dawdle, as if a sudden thought had struck him, "there has a family lately come to reside in this neighbourhood from London—they are residing at the 'Honeysuckles'—and as I attend the family, I will ask if they require anybody to superintend the education of their children."

"I shall be much obliged, sir, if you will do so."

"Most certainly I will."

"What is the name, sir?" inquired Crumbledust.

"Greenwell, sir—Greenwell."

"Oh! indeed. I don't know them, sir—I don't know them."

The matter being so arranged, and Dr. Dawdle being rather pressed for time, Mr. Crumbledust wished him good morning.

The Greenwells were a very wealthy family. Mr. Greenwell had accumulated a large fortune upon the Stock Exchange, and having retired from the business, which he had transferred to his son, he had come with his family to reside in the country. The family consisted of himself and Mrs. Greenwell, and their two daughters, the youngest of whom was twelve years of age, and her sister two years older.

Dr. Dawdle, on the day on which he had the interview with Mr. Crumbledust relative to Miss Wallford, made inquiries amongst several of his friends who were intimate with the Greenwells, and he ascertained, to his great satisfaction, that they were actually in want of such a person as Miss Wallford. He therefore called upon them without further loss of time.

After some preliminary conversation, Dr. Dawdle introduced the subject.

"I understand," he said, "that you want a young lady to reside in the family, and to act as governess to your daughters?"

"Yes," Mr. Greenwell replied, who was a man about sixty, and of very gentlemanly appearance—"yes, sir, we wish for a person capable of giving instruction to the children. The young lady who was our governess in London, left us on our removal to this place. She was remarkably clever, and a very agreeable person."

"My reason for asking the question," said Dawdle, "is because a young lady of my acquaintance desires a situation of the kind in a respectable family, and if you have no one in view, she will suit you admirably."

"It is very lucky," said Mrs. Greenwell, "that we had not appointed any person, as we have had several applications respecting the situation, but we deferred answering any of them till we had been settled here for a few weeks."

"What is the name of the young lady?" inquired Mr. Greenwell.

"Wallford, sir. She belongs to a very respectable family, but since the death of her father the family has been in somewhat reduced circumstances. Her mother, whom I attended during her illness, died a few weeks ago."

"I think, my dear," said Mrs. Greenwell, addressing her husband, "we need have no hesitation in appointing an interview."

"None whatever, my dear—none whatever. I am sure the young lady will be what Dr. Dawdle represents her."

"If I had a daughter," said Dawdle, "there's no young lady whom I would sooner trust with their education than Miss Kate Wallford. I feel assured, if she is admitted into your family, she will give you satisfaction."

"No doubt of it—no doubt of it," said Greenwell.

"What day shall we fix to see the young lady, my dear?" inquired Mrs. Greenwell.

"Oh, my dear—make it agreeable to yourself. To-morrow, or Thursday, or Friday—it is quite immaterial to me."

"Will to-morrow suit Miss Wallford?" inquired Mrs. Greenwell.

"I dare say it will," replied Dawdle. "There is nothing, I believe, to prevent her calling upon you."

"Then we'll say to-morrow," said Mrs. Greenwell.

"Very well—that's settled," said Dawdle.

"How do you like your new residence?" inquired the doctor, after a pause.

"Why, it's retired and pleasant," replied Greenwell, "but we shall miss for a short time the bustle and animation of London."

"Ah! very likely—the Stock Exchange and all that. By-the-by, talking of the Stock Exchange, reminds me of a friend of mine who has now been dead some years—he was a remarkable fellow, sir—he was a member of the Stock Exchange, and one of the best calculators of his day. You know him, I dare say."

"What was his name?"

"Cocker, sir. The same name as his illustrious namesake."

"Oh! I knew him very well."

"There was a question of his, I remember, that used to be a puzzler—what do you think it was?"

"I have no idea," said Greenwell.

"I should think you had no idea. I should never have supposed that a question of the kind would have occurred to any man. This was it, sir. How long would it occupy a man to pick up and deposit in baskets all the stones that are to be found upon the road, at any given period, between Charing-cross and Westminster Abbey, supposing he was capable of picking up a hundred in five minutes?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Greenwell—"the question is certainly a poser."

"Is it really true, Dr. Dawdle," inquired Mrs. Greenwell, "that a gentleman of your acquaintance seriously propounded a question of that kind?"

"Fact, ma'am," replied Dawdle.

"By Jove! it's the most extraordinary question I ever heard," exclaimed Greenwell.

"I don't think there is anything equal to it in the arithmetic," said Dawdle.

"I should say not," said Greenwell.

"But the best part of the story is, that the question was capable of an answer, and that Cocker was the man who was prepared to give it."

"My dear sir," said Greenwell, "do you seriously mean that Cocker could give a rational answer to the question?"

"Fact, sir," said Dawdle. "Had all his calculations ready—black and white—to show for it. The calculation occupied him a length of time, and I have reason to believe that the result was not so very far from the mark either."

"Why, sir, it would occupy a man some years in making the computation," observed Greenwell.

"Certainly a very long time," replied Dawdle.

The doctor, who was in a somewhat facetious humour, entertained his friends with sundry other questions *hoc genus omne*, and which neither Mr. nor Mrs. Greenwell being able to answer, nor perhaps the doctor himself, were not very edifying.

On the following day, Kate, accompanied by Dr. Dawdle, had an interview with the Greenwells, and it was at once arranged that that young lady should immediately enter the family in the capacity of governess to the children.

Under the superintendence of Mr. Crumbledust, the furniture belonging to the Wallfords, with some exceptions, was sold, and the house lately occupied by them let to a new tenant. Fred was, therefore, compelled to go to lodgings.

XLI.

APPREHENSION AND CONVICTION OF LINDENBERG—A CONFESSION.

About nine months after the committal of the murder at the Old Hall, a crime of a dreadful and daring nature was committed on board of a vessel in the Thames. The facts of the case were these: A gentleman had taken a berth on board of a foreign vessel, with the view of proceeding to America. On the evening before the intended departure of the vessel, he had gone on board with his luggage, and on the following morning it was accidentally discovered, by some persons who had occasion to search the vessel, that he had been murdered during the night. The body was found in a secret part of the cabin, with several deep wounds about the head and temples, which seemed to have been effected by a hammer, or some instrument of that kind. The consequence of this discovery was, that the vessel was seized, and the captain and the crew lodged in prison.

The vessel was a Prussian vessel, and she was called the *Morgenstern*. When the men were examined, it appeared that the captain and the mate were alone implicated in the murder, and that the rest of the crew had neither knowledge of, nor part in, the transaction. It was supposed that the object in committing the murder was for the sake of plunder, as the gentleman had a large sum of money in his possession. It was likewise discovered that the captain, who had in the first instance reported his name to be Berkholtz, was Captain Lindenberg, and that the vessel which now sailed under the name of the *Morgenstern* was no other than the *Pfeil*.

The captain and mate were committed for trial, and the men were kept in custody to appear against them.

The evidence adduced against the prisoners at the trial was altogether circumstantial, but it was so strong that it was not easily to be resisted. They were, therefore, both convicted and ordered for execution. Broadface, who had come up to London for the purpose of identifying the man he had seen at the Old Hall on the night of the murder of Sir Luke, declared it was his conviction that Lindenberg was the man, but as the fate of Sir Luke was still wrapped in mystery, the charge of the murder was not included in the indictment against the prisoners.

Up to the time of his trial, Lindenberg seemed to be little aware of the awful and dangerous situation in which he was placed. He conducted himself in every respect as an innocent man, and as a person confident of his acquittal. He conversed with his usual flow of spirits—he ate his food with his usual appetite. It was, however, difficult to say whether

in this he was not acting a part, and endeavouring to impose upon those by whom he was surrounded, by assuming an indifference and a sense of security which in reality he did not feel. The mate, on the other hand, was depressed, and conducted himself in every respect as a guilty man. He was restless and uneasy, and appeared to look forward to his trial with the greatest fear and anxiety.

After his conviction, Lindenberg's manner underwent a complete change. He was sad, and his usual fortitude and cheerfulness forsook him. The reverend gentleman who attended him pressed him earnestly, as he hoped for mercy hereafter, to make a full disclosure of his guilt; and after repeated exhortations to this effect, the following confession was extracted from him, which was confirmed in almost every particular by that of the mate, who had sailed with Lindenberg almost from the commencement of his career.

It appeared that shortly after the period when Sir Luke Mortimer had become a bankrupt, Lindenberg, with his vessel the *Pfeil*, was in a port only a few miles distant from the seat of Sir Luke. It was at this time that he first began the illicit commerce which from that period to the present he had more or less indulged in, sometimes realising large sums by his daring adventures, at others losing his contraband merchandise, and being either imprisoned or fined for his delinquencies. It was whilst in the port in question that he determined to explore the neighbouring coast for the purpose of discovering, if possible, some suitable place for the concealment of his goods, and after a long search, he at last arrived at the Old Priory. He examined it minutely, and discovered by accident the trap that conducted to the subterranean vault beneath. He procured a light, raised the stone, and descended, and proceeded along the passage till he had arrived at the end. There he thought was its termination; but he was surprised to find, on removing a flag from the ground, which, being rather loose, had attracted his notice, that a short flight of steps conducted him to another passage. He descended the steps, and being determined to discover whither the passage actually led, he walked along it till his further progress was again stopped by a wall. At this place he found that one of the stones in the wall was loose, and could easily be removed. With little difficulty he dislodged it, and the cavity caused by its removal admitted him into a kind of cellar. He entered it, and found his way to various other apartments, and at last he became aware that he was in a spacious mansion, which was destitute almost of all furniture, and uninhabited. The house he afterwards found was the Old Hall, the late family seat of the Mortimers. He retraced his steps and emerged from the vault, and supposing that some advantage might be derived from the discovery he had made, he determined to take an early opportunity of returning, accompanied by some of his men, with the view of exploring it more minutely. He chose a late hour of the night for his second visit, conceiving that at that time he and his companions should be exposed to less risk of a discovery or surprise than if they went thither during the day, when people were abroad, and, for aught he knew, perhaps busy in the house. A few days, therefore, after his first visit, Lindenberg, with two of his men, again entered the vault, and so effected their entrance into the house. They proceeded to examine each apartment with lights, which they had procured for the purpose, and

which shed a feeble light over the place. Lindenberg was afraid that the lights might attract attention, and hence it was that he deemed it expedient to illuminate the place as little as possible. The object in searching the house was partly idle curiosity and a desire to examine a building that communicated with so singular a subterranean passage. The only apartment in the house which contained any furniture was that which has been designated as the "Tapestried Chamber," and of which a description has already been given.

The party returned again to the place where the vessel lay, without anything having been resolved upon either as to the vault or the uninhabited mansion.

The vault appeared, in every respect, most eligible for the object that Lindenberg had in view—that is, a suitable place of reception for his illegal merchandise till a favourable opportunity presented itself of disposing of it. Before, however, taking any further steps in the matter, he determined to visit the neighbourhood of the Old Hall, to make inquiries respecting it, and to ascertain if there was any likelihood of a tenant taking possession of it, for he would not consent to secrete his goods in a place which was exposed to the intrusion of the inhabitants of the house.

It has already been mentioned, that shortly after the flight of Sir Luke reports most prejudicial to his character had been spread abroad. It was said that he had not only treated his wife with the greatest cruelty, but that he had actually murdered her. The people in the neighbourhood, being both ignorant and addicted to superstition, seized hold of the slightest pretext to give a bad character to the house; and the occasion was not long in presenting itself. The lights which Lindenberg and his men had used in exploring the place had been observed, and as the cause of them was certainly quite inexplicable, it was gravely affirmed that the Old Hall was haunted.

When Lindenberg arrived at Morlington, and began to make inquiries concerning the house, he ascertained that it was advertised to be let, but that there would be little chance of securing a tenant for it, because the house had a very bad character; that lights had been seen in the rooms at all hours of the night; and that, in a word, it was haunted without a doubt. Lindenberg was amused with the story, and determined to profit by it. He could obtain, however, no information in respect to the vault which he had accidentally discovered, and he was in hopes that the people might be in ignorance concerning it. When he returned to his companions, he apprised them of the effect that their nocturnal visits had produced, and it was determined to pay two or three more visits to the house, with the view of confirming the impression that was entertained with regard to it. One of the men who sang with a remarkably fine tenor voice, and who played with great taste upon a lute, was, besides, employed to give additional effect to their visitations, and to impress yet stronger feelings of terror upon the minds of the inhabitants of the district.

The fact that a man intended to watch all night in the house came to the knowledge of Lindenberg, and he accordingly took steps, as has already been shown, to sustain the character that the house had already assumed. The disappearance of Sir Luke on the occasion of his watch-

ing was likewise caused by the captain, who conveyed him to his vessel, where he was detained till he had purchased his discharge by a large sum of money.

Partly by these means, and perhaps partly by the unsuitability of the house, it remained without a tenant, and was suffered to fall into the dilapidated condition in which it was described to be when this narrative commenced. The place was, therefore, visited more or less by Lindenberg during a period of thirty years, and the access to it was of so private a character, that they had hitherto always escaped detection.

It was during one of their visits to the Hall that a quarrel arose between one of his men and the mate, and that the former was shot in the struggle. He was left in the house for dead, and placed upon the bed in the "Tapestried Chamber" till the following night, when the body was removed to the vault. The night that the event took place was that on which Broadface and his companion had visited the house. The body, therefore, that he beheld upon the bed was that of the man who had been killed, and it was the same which was subsequently discovered by Sir Luke when he was incarcerated in the vault. The body was afterwards interred in a piece of ground adjoining the gardens of the Old Hall, and not in the garden, as Broadface had supposed, when he beheld what he believed to be a spectral funeral. Lindenberg, who was quite aware of the terror that his previous schemes had produced, determined to array his men as we have already described, and to issue in procession from the Hall with torches. Masks were employed for the purpose of imparting a more frightful appearance to the faces of the men.

In his several conversations with Sir Luke, Lindenberg was happy to find that he was ignorant that the subterranean vault communicated with the Hall. Upon the subject of Sir Luke's murder he was silent, and he neither avowed his innocence nor denied his guilt.

With respect to the murder committed on board of the vessel, he confessed that both he and the mate had been equal participators in the crime.

XLII.

THE EXECUTION.

THE execution of Lindenberg and his accomplice was ordered to take place at eight o'clock on the morning subsequent to the night upon which the preceding confession was made. On the night before the execution the Old Bailey presented an extraordinary scene of animation. Thousands of people were drawn to the spot by curiosity—some to see the place where the men, on the following morning, were to pay the last penalty of the law; others to see the preparations that were making for the great event, which promised to afford so much gratification to the lovers of the horrible, and to be so lucrative to those who use the occasion for picking pockets and committing other offences. There were men already engaged in erecting the barricades which were to break the pressure, and to prevent injury to the thousands who would assemble in the morning to behold the sad spectacle. The incessant noise of the hammers, as the men were engaged with their work, appeared like music to the ears of some of the spectators already assembled, but it grated harshly upon the

ears of the unhappy criminals, whose sands of life were so swiftly running, and whom only a few hours separated from eternity. The scene at the time we speak of was quite as disgusting and repulsive as that which presented itself a few hours later. The houses of entertainment opposite the black walls of Newgate were filled with a boisterous and festive company; the conversation was chiefly regarding the approaching event, which was looked forward to with the fondest anticipation.

A boy was passing up and down in front of one of the houses in the street, and as one of the passengers passed by, he thus accosted him:

"I say, sir, do you want a nice place, eh?"

"A noice pleace—what dost t' mean, me lod, eh?"

"I means a vinder, sir, to see the hexecution in the morning."

"I doant exzackly understond thee, my lod."

"Why you know, stoopid, there's two men agoing to be hanged in the morning."

"Yees, I ken that."

"Then if you want a good place for seeing 'em, you shall have one for 'alf-a-crown at that 'ere vinder;" and the lad pointed with his finger to the house opposite.

"Ecod, thou doesn't mean, me lod, that they let pleaces for money to see foalk hanged?"

"In course we does; and where be the 'arm?"

"That bangs all," exclaimed Broadface, for it was he. "I ha hard a good deal o' Lunnon, and its wicked ways, and its roguery, and its grander, and all that, but I niver hard owt sae bad as that, neither."

"There an't no 'arm in seeing the men hung," replied the lad.

"I think, me lod, if there was three to be hanged in the moarning i'stead o' two, society wad be all the better for the addition."

"I should ha no hobjection, sir, to see you among 'em—not a bit," said the arch youth, turning the tables upon Broadface.

"If thou doesn't mend thy manners, it'll be thy turn next," said Broadface, walking on.

Since the trial of the prisoners, at which Broadface had been present, he had remained in London in order to see as much of the metropolis as possible. He was accordingly passing through the Old Bailey on the night in question, when the conversation we have described took place.

To return. Many hours before the time appointed for the execution arrived, the people began to come in crowds to secure the most convenient places for witnessing the sight. They poured along all the avenues approaching the place where the dreadful tragedy was to be enacted. They poured down Newgate-street, Holborn, the Strand, Cheapside; indeed, men, women, and children were to be seen hastening in all directions to witness the grand spectacle that was to be represented. In the vicinity of Smithfield, the ordinary business was going forward in the usual way, and men were trafficking and dealing—examining and driving cattle and swine about—altogether regardless of the approaching fate of the unhappy men whose earthly career was so soon to terminate by a painful and an ignominious death.

At seven o'clock the whole area in front of the prison was densely packed by the assembled people. Those who were there were, as is most generally the case, of the lowest order. A very large portion of them

consisted of women, who seemed to be quite prepared to expose themselves to any annoyance occasioned by the assemblage of so vast a concourse of people, rather than forego the pleasure of witnessing the sight.

"I say, Bill," said a man to a person who was standing near him, "I wonder if they'll die game?"

"The papers speak werry favourably on 'em, and say as how they both have a deal o' pluck."

"The capting, I hear, is a brave fellow," said the other.

"If he is, this ere haffair will try him a bit."

"Ah! I should think it would now."

The scene that the Old Bailey at this time presented was, perhaps, as dreadful as any that can be described. It was a thick, unwholesome morning, and the gas-lights were dimly seen through the intense fog that prevailed. The tops of the houses on all sides which commanded a view of the scaffold were covered with eager spectators, and the windows facing the prison were crammed to an excess. The black engine of death might be seen looming through the darkness. A solitary gas-light near to it still continued to burn. Those ignorant of the occasion of the assembly would have supposed that it was a gala-day, and that the people were met to celebrate some great public event, or to participate in a series of enjoyments similar to those provided at a race or a fair. How different was the fact. Oh, Life! oh, Death! how shall we draw the distinction, since both are equally capable of administering food to the morbid appetite, and of affording gratification and excitement to the mind! These people were assembled to behold men in the most degrading position in which it was possible to be placed—they were assembled to witness two murderers expiate their crimes upon the scaffold. The yells and cries that from time to time rent the air—the jokes and laughter that prevailed—would have led one to suppose that the Old Bailey was a Pandemonium, and the creatures within it so many demons.

When the day began to dawn, the church of St. Sepulchre and the walls of Newgate began to grow distinct against the cold, blue sky. As the time approached, the faces of the dense multitude were ever and again turned to the church, to ascertain how long it would be before the procession appeared. Eight o'clock at length struck, and the multitude became excited to an extraordinary degree, and bent their eager gaze towards the scaffold. Simultaneously the prison-bell pealed out its melancholy tones, and the procession was already on its way to the place of execution.

When they were ascending the scaffold, a cry ran through the crowd that hats should be taken off, and immediately the command was complied with. The noise and tumult which had hitherto been so boisterous suddenly ceased, and all was still. All eyes were directed to the platform upon which the prisoners stood. A Roman Catholic priest attended them; and whilst they were engaged with him in prayer, they appeared to be absorbed in their occupation, and to be unconscious of the presence of the multitude that stood around. The prisoners afterwards shook hands with those by whom they were attended, and delivered themselves into the hands of the hangman, who, having performed the odious duty that devolved upon him, descended the scaffold. In a minute afterwards the bolt was drawn, and in a short time the unhappy men had ceased to exist.

XLIII.

THE WILL.

THE confession which Lindenberg had made before his death, together with the particulars of the execution, soon reached Morlington, where the subjects were freely discussed in all their bearings. The solution to the mystery in which the Old Hall had been so long involved, was received with a great deal of astonishment, and many superstitious people were rather disappointed, I dare say, to find that the Old Hall was not haunted after all, and that henceforth it would no longer be the object of terror which it had been during the last thirty years.

Mr. Crumbledust was glad to hear everything so satisfactorily explained, for that circumstance would enhance the value of the property, and thus be some pecuniary advantage to the heir, whoever he might be.

Since the death of Mrs. Wallford, Mr. Crumbledust had taken frequent occasions to invite both Fred and Kate to his house. He had done so for three reasons—partly because he wished to show them all the kindness in his power, so as to alleviate the loss they had so recently sustained; and partly to afford an opportunity for Fred to meet his sister; and partly to afford the latter an opportunity to visit a young lady who was his niece, and who, since the death of his old housekeeper, which had occurred a few months before, had come to reside with him. The young lady was the daughter of a clergyman in the north of England, with a somewhat large family and rather a meagre living. He had married the only sister of Mr. Crumbledust at an early period in life, and a young family had risen up around them almost before an adequate provision was made for their respectable maintenance. Emily May was the youngest of the family—she was scarcely nineteen when she came to live with her uncle. She did not possess the fine features of Kate Wallford, but she was rich in personal attractions. Her figure was about the ordinary height, and graceful as a sylph. Her joyous laugh—which I confess was sometimes rather boisterous—exorcised at once any melancholy or dulness that might prevail. Kate Wallford was glad to have found a friend who was in every respect so congenial to her taste; and Emily, on her side, had equal cause for congratulation. As to Fred, he, perhaps,—however, we are anticipating.

"I'll tell you what, children," said Mr. Crumbledust one day, "although the Old Hall will of course be of greater value than it formerly was, yet it will certainly not possess so much veneration in my eyes as it used to do."

"And how is that, uncle?" inquired Emily.

"It used before," replied Mr. Crumbledust, "to be a powerful evidence of the truth of supernatural phenomena, and a flat contradiction to the errors that are daily propagated by the degenerate people of the present day. The scepticism that is abroad is really alarming—perhaps we are more free from it in this locality than the people of many other places, but that is owing to our enlightenment—it is owing to our veneration for the opinions and sentiments of our forefathers—our glorious ancestors of 1710. They believed in these superstitions, as they were called. They gave credit to a ghost, if one perchance should present itself, but it is widely different at present. The people have grown so hardened, so bigoted, so averse to truth, that I believe, if a ghost were stalking into

their chambers at midnight, for the purpose of convincing them they were in error, and to convert them to the truth, they would not believe it. The Old Hall is undoubtedly of more value, and on that account I am glad, but, at the same time, it has no longer that claim to my veneration which it once possessed."

The young people could scarcely restrain their laughter at this outburst of feeling upon the part of Mr. Crumbledust in behalf of the good old folks of 1710.

"The subject of apparitions," observed Kate, "is one upon which a variety of opinion exists; but no doubt the majority of the people disbelieve in them."

"Exactly," said Crumbledust; "but have we not one excellent authority, at least, for the truth of them? Was there not a Dr. Johnson, and was there not a Cock-lane ghost?"

"It is very surprising," observed Fred, "that he should have been a believer in spiritual interposition."

"Surprising!" exclaimed Crumbledust; "not at all—not at all. It would have been surprising, sir, if he had not been a believer in them. Dr. Johnson was an enlightened man—a man of remarkable powers of mind. I venerate his memory for the remarkable works he has given to the world. I venerate him for his 'Rambler,' his 'Tatler,' his 'Rasselas.' I venerate him for his ponderous Dictionary; but, by Jove! I venerate him more, sir, for his belief in the Cock-lane ghost."

It was impossible for them to restrain their merriment any longer, and a hearty laugh followed this declaration of Mr. Crumbledust.

On the Sunday following the occasion in question, Mr. Crumbledust entertained a few of his friends at dinner. There were present Mr. and Mrs. Greenwell, Mr. Arthur Greenwell, who had come down from London on a visit to the family, Dr. Dawdle, Fred, and Kate.

Arthur Greenwell was about five-and-twenty years of age; he was tall and gentlemanly in his appearance, and his manners were scarcely less imposing. It was the first visit he had paid his relatives since Miss Wallford had become a member of the family, and he was so fascinated by her attractions that he paid her a great deal of attention, though perhaps nothing more than he would have done to a hundred other pretty and agreeable girls. When, however, the time for his return to London arrived, he left the "Honeysuckles" with greater regret than on his arrival he had conceived possible; and when he bade farewell to Kate, he pressed her hand more warmly than the mere bonds of friendship, perhaps, warranted. It was impossible to say what this might forebode, but Kate put the happiest construction upon it. On his arrival in town he wrote one or two letters to her, in which he detailed the particulars of his journey, and so forth.

When the period allotted by the late Sir Luke Mortimer had elapsed, the will of that gentleman was opened by Mr. Crumbledust, and, to the surprise of everybody, Frederick Wallford, in consideration of the kindness shown by his father to Sir Luke when in adversity, was appointed heir-at-law; and directions were further contained in the will, that, out of the property, 10,000*l.* should be appropriated as a portion to Kate Wallford, and a legacy of 100*l.* be paid to Mr. Crumbledust, and a further sum be applied for the purpose of defraying the funeral expenses

of Sir Luke, and of placing the Old Hall in a suitable state of repair. The property, besides the estate, consisted of investments in the funds and other securities, and was entrusted to the guardianship of Mr. Crumbledust till Fred and Kate should arrive at age.

There were, perhaps, none who felt more jealous and aggrieved at the good fortune which had befallen their relatives than the Claverings. They were conscious that, during the lifetime of Mrs. Wallford, they had paid her few marks of respect, and, since her death, had almost completely disregarded the children. Whilst, however, they were exceedingly proud and vain, and particularly desirous of supporting what they called the dignity of their station, they were, on the other hand, equally ready to flatter those who enjoyed the favours of fortune, and whose station in life was superior to their own. Hence, when the high expectations of Fred and his sister became known, they at once threw aside all reserve, concealed their mortification and jealousy, and claimed again a relationship which but a short time before they would readily have forgotten. These professions of friendship were received at their own value, and Fred and Kate neither favoured nor discouraged their advances.

XLIV.

THE CONCLUSION.

A PERIOD of five years has passed away since the termination of the last chapter. The Old Hall has undergone a thorough repair—the gardens and pleasure-grounds have been decorated and laid out in the most elegant style, and several herds of deer browse in the park in front of the house. The Hall presents a scene of animation to which for many years it has been a stranger. The servants hurry about—the carriages of the neighbouring gentry are continually arriving to pay their visits to Frederick Wallford, Esq., and his lovely and accomplished lady. Two children have already sprung from the union, and Mr. Crumbledust, who is almost constantly with them, declares that the children of his niece do no discredit to their mother, and hopes that two such lovely May-blossoms will be taught by their parents to have a due veneration for the manners, customs, and opinions of their ancestors, and particularly of the good people of 1710.

When the property came into Fred's possession, he of course quitted the employment of Messrs. Worm, Grub, and Co., though he was strenuously implored by these gentlemen to become a member of the firm, which, however, he respectfully declined. Fred, indeed, had other views, for at the next general election he intended to put up for a neighbouring borough.

Dr. Dawdle was a frequent guest at the Hall, and the difficult questions for calculation which he was perpetually propounding to Mr. and Mrs. Wallford, not only perplexed but amused them exceedingly.

Honest Broadface was frequently to be seen in the servants'-hall, and he frequently regaled the domestics with accounts of his marvellous adventures when it was thought that the place was haunted.

"Aye, marry," said he, "there was a time, and not vera long sin neither, when nobody would cum near t' place—when it was thought that the auld feller himsel had ta'en possession on't, and now it's inhabited again as it used to be in the arly part of Sir Luke's time and that of

his ancestors—now all is life and merriment in t' auld pleace, and summat loike. Well, it's better as it is, and cum, here's all our healths," he continued, raising a foaming jug of ale to his mouth, "and long may maister and missus live to enjoy the property they ha so luckily fallen onto."

Miss Morton continued to conduct the school with great success, and in consequence of the splendid system that was adopted at the establishment, there was not a pupil in the school who had not the greatest awe and veneration for past times, which symptom Mr. Crumbledust hailed as a happy omen of the future improvement of society.

The death of Mr. Greenwell, which occurred about twelve months after the family had come to reside at the "Honeysuckles," induced Mr. Arthur to dispose of his business in London, and to come and live with his mother in the country. It was partly at her request, and partly a love of the country and field-sports in general, that induced him to adopt this course. When a suitable period had elapsed after the death of his father, the lovely Kate Wallford became his wife, whereupon they went to live in a house only a short distance from that in which Mrs. Greenwell resided.

The Claverings and Mr. Pennifeather were occasionally seen amongst their relatives, but it was observed that no great friendship existed between them.

It was about this time that the name of a person was becoming celebrated throughout all Europe by his productions. He was residing in Italy, but there seemed to be some doubt as to whether he was really an Italian or an Englishman. His fame rested upon his skill as a painter, but more particularly as a portrait-painter, and he was rapidly amassing a large fortune by his labours. The chief excellence for which he was remarkable, was the fidelity of expression which he imparted to all portraits, and to the remarkable skill he displayed in painting the eyes, and to the fire and expression which, by some mysterious power known only to himself, he was enabled to give them. The portraits which he was sometimes in the habit of painting were not always the most agreeable to look upon. Sometimes he painted the countenances of men labouring under the fiercest passions of the soul—despair, jealousy, fear—and he threw such a wildness and vitality about the eyes, that the portraits frequently excited the fear and alarm of the persons who witnessed them. So strange a power did he possess in this style, that the ignorant attributed it to some evil co-operation, and by some he was called the "Demon Painter." When his fame had been established, he came to reside in England. His chief place of residence was London, but he was frequently staying with Mr. Wallford at his seat in Yorkshire. The name of the painter was Merton.

There was one whom he frequently saw, and who entertained the highest respect for him. It was Miss Morton. She did not forget the kindness which many years before he had shown to her, and she remembered that it was to him that she owed everything she possessed.

Some years after Mr. Wallford had come into possession of the Old Hall, the body of Sir Luke Mortimer was accidentally discovered in the cellar. It was still capable of being identified. The family vault that had received the remains of his ancestors, received him—THE LAST OF THE HOUSE.

THE QUIET HOUSE.

In a quiet street in the outskirts of my dear old native town, there stood a simple cottage. So little stir and noise was observable in it, that it might have been thought uninhabited, had one not been led to infer the contrary by the appearance of the bright windows on the back of the house, which, commanding a fine prospect over hill and dale, were elegantly curtained, and cheerfully set out with choice flowers, and by a female form, of which occasionally a glimpse might be caught through the panes.

This retired dwelling was the unpretending home of a quiet maiden lady, who, indeed, belonged to a family who were quite the reverse. But out of the circle of her own immediate friends, she was only known to the poor and sick, and to the heavy laden. In the world and with the world she lived not. The gossip and small-talk of the day, which are the life of little towns, had ceased to exist for her; but real joy or sorrow she warmly and cordially shared with those dear to her; and although being very calm and gentle in all her own ways, yet she could be right playful and childlike with the young and merry ones. It is true, however, that she always best liked the quiet seclusion of her solitary home, over which the spirit of peace and order presided, and where she loved to rest her weary eyes on the rich green meadows in the valley beneath. Yet she was not ill-pleased now and then to see her nephews and nieces assembled around her; the young folks being only too glad to make her house the scene of a happy family meeting, when the good aunt so readily and kindly allowed their youthful mirth to have its full swing, and, good-temperedly, did not grudge her trouble in putting everything to rights again after her rebellious guests had completely upset her little household.

Aunt Mary's birthday fell in May; but it was an understood thing that she then did not want any visitors, as on that day, for many years past, a gentleman regularly used to alight, in the morning, at the principal hotel of the town, who at once betook himself to Aunt Mary's, and passed several days with her. They walked out together, read together, and engaged in the most earnest conversation, which seemed far from being brought to a conclusion even at the moment of parting.

After these visits, Aunt Mary became still more quiet for a time. Her sisters well knew that they must leave her alone for a season, until she again appeared among them of her own accord, with her usual gentle and unobtrusive manner.

The visits of this stranger, who was of distinguished appearance, at first caused a great sensation in the little town; people, however, gradually became accustomed to them. He was a professor of a neighbouring university, and an author of repute. All his works came fresh from the press to the maiden apartment of Aunt Mary, who kept up a constant correspondence with him. Yet, although the townspeople had long since ceased to wonder at these visits, Aunt Mary's half-grown nephews and nieces—especially the latter — went on tormenting their parents with questions as to whether he was a relative of hers—but, to be sure, in that case he would also have been one of theirs—or merely a

friend?—but people have no such friends. The parents were silent on the subject, and the mystery remained unsolved.

Whether Aunt Mary had ever been handsome, was likewise a matter of speculation. By the side of her friend, who, though a few years older, was still in the prime and full vigour of life, she looked worn and faded; but there was about her a grace and gentleness, a breath of that peace which passeth all understanding, and which is above the chances and changes of this mortal life.

Aunt Mary was exceedingly delicate; her health and strength began to fail ere she had reached middle age. Hitherto she had generally had one or other of her nieces with her, and had thus been the chief means of forming their characters by the quiet, yet powerful influence which she exercised over their minds. Latterly, she requested her eldest sister to allow Hermina, who had always been her favourite niece, to remain with her altogether. Hermina was only too glad to comply with the wish of her beloved relative, although in her own heart she felt satisfied that it was not on the score of illness that aunty needed a companion.

"But, mamma, before I go to live with Aunt Mary, you must tell me something about the strange gentleman. Pray tell me what I must do when he comes?"

"Well, my child," said the mother, "you are right, perhaps, this time. You are now old enough to learn something about it. I will, therefore, tell you all that I know on the subject. It is, indeed, a strange story.

"Your aunt, as you are aware, was the youngest of the family, and a great pet and favourite of poor mamma's. My younger sister and myself were already married, and Mary was not quite fourteen when mamma died. She had been a most excellent and pious woman, and her death was a great grief to all of us, but especially to Mary, who was quite inconsolable. From that time, Mary no longer found happiness at home. Papa was of a stern and reserved character, and had never sought to gain our affections. After a short time he married again; and now it can be no harm to tell you that we were not particularly fond of our stepmother. She was not exactly an ill-disposed woman, but she was rather whimsical and trifling. The first few weeks she lavished the greatest tenderness upon Mary, but after that, she took but little notice of her, and left her entirely to herself. Thus, Mary gradually became more and more reserved, and, with the exception of the clergyman who gave her religious instruction, she liked best the companionship of her flowers and her books. Nevertheless she could be merry enough sometimes, and was a very pretty girl, although quite unpretending."

"Am I like her, mamma?"

"You, indeed! you are not half so pretty; and you do not dress so simply and neatly as Mary used to dress. Well, then, Dr. R.—I mean the professor—became acquainted with Mary when he came to visit her father during his vacation. They soon formed an attachment for each other, and no one made any objections to the match. Indeed, we all thought Mary very fortunate to be betrothed, in her eighteenth year, to a man of his character and standing in the world. Mary seemed to bloom into new life, and became a person of great importance in the family. It was as if the eyes of her father and of her brothers-in-law

were all at once opened to her loveliness and the many endearing qualities of her mind, and above all, to the sterling information which in her own quiet way she had managed to acquire. The stepmother, who was likewise seized with a sudden fit of intense maternal tenderness, displayed the most praiseworthy zeal in providing an elegant outfit.

"Mary was fresh and blooming, like a rose. Her taste for books and study just suited the doctor. Her friends certainly used to tease her sadly about her profound studies and learned conversations; and the erudite lovers wrote to each other whole cart-loads of letters; so that a special messenger was frequently put in requisition for them; but occasionally they also behaved, as other lovers do, more like children than like staid, sensible persons. Thus, all proceeded very satisfactorily, only it struck me that Mary very rarely went to see her old religious instructor, and seemed particularly reserved and shy in his presence.

"They had been engaged about six months, when the doctor obtained a nomination as professor at the university of ——. Their happiness was then complete, and the wedding day was fixed. Mary was delighted at the idea of presiding over a house of her own, the wedding dress was finished, and the banns were about to be proclaimed.

"Professor R.'s presence being required at the university, he came to take leave of Mary for the last time, until he should return to claim her entirely. Mary was as cheerful and affectionate as ever. The professor had to start that night with the diligence, previous to which the happy couple took a long walk together—if I remember right, to the cemetery, a favourite spot of theirs. Mary returned quite animated and buoyed up by the exciting conversation, and they parted as tenderly and loving as ever.

"On the next morning—I was then on a visit to my father—Mary appeared at the breakfast-table, looking so pale that we were all quite startled, although we attributed it only to the parting of last evening. Our stepmother, with a view to cheer her, said: 'To-morrow we will drive over to town, in order to complete everything for you, as there are only four weeks left to the wedding.'

"Mary then replied, calmly, but with a faint voice, 'I shall not give you any further trouble, mother; the wedding will not take place.'

"There we all sat, struck with wonder and amazement. We should have considered her mad, but for the calmness with which she bore the numerous questions and reproaches showered upon her. And Ludwig?" I asked at last. 'I have written to him this morning,' was her only reply. This was all we could learn from her.

"The professor arrived two days after in a state of the greatest agitation. We all anxiously expected him, hoping that he would bring matters round again; but he also was silent as to the cause of this unexpected turn of affairs. 'I hope you will bring the girl to her senses,' said the father, 'for I have no patience with her.' Mary received the professor with great composure, although she was evidently more timid and reserved than usual. They walked in the garden, and there they sat ever so long, engaged in the most earnest conversation, in the very summer-house where they had first pledged their love to each other. We had hoped that all would now end satisfactorily; but when they at last returned, they were both pale as death. The professor informed her father that he

could not but yield to Mary's wish, and that he resigned his claim to her hand. He then shook hands with all of us, and also with Mary, whom he besides kissed on her icy cold forehead; after which he departed.

"Although Mary's conduct appeared most unaccountable, I still felt too much pity for her to think of reproaching her. Her father, however, was much enraged, and the fit of tenderness with which the stepmother had been so suddenly seized, was now just as suddenly at an end. I took Mary home with me for some time. She was in such a low, nervous state, that I feared the worst. However, the quiet life she led with me exercised a beneficial influence over her mind, so that by degrees she recovered.

"It was not as is generally the case with lovers; no letters, no presents, no portraits were returned; they wrote to each other as they had done before, though perhaps not quite so frequently; and Mary read his letters with such intense anxiety as if the happiness of her whole life depended upon each. I could not bring myself to believe that their engagement was entirely at an end, and when Mary had again recovered, I exhausted all my eloquence to induce her to change her resolution, or at any rate to ascertain the reason of it. However mild and yielding she is in other respects, on this point she remained firm and silent. From that time I could not help remarking that she became even more gentle and amiable than she was before. She seemed never to think of herself, she was so busy, so pious, so charitable and kind to the poor and afflicted; in fact, she appeared to me quite angelic. When our father's anger had cooled down, Mary returned home. Things at home went much as usual; time never fails to soothe all our sorrows and disappointments. Her father said nothing more, but, as he gazed on his pale child, he also seemed to feel that an angel had entered under his roof.

"From year to year we still hoped that a change would come over her, but she remained the same. Eight years after, our father died; the stepmother went to live with her own relations. We should all have been delighted to have had Mary with us, but about this time we had just inherited an old house in B—— from a cousin of ours, and as we could not easily dispose of it, Mary requested us to give it up to her. This we did, and ever since Mary has led the same solitary life. She is in constant correspondence with the professor, who comes to see her on her birthday every year, and sends her all his works. But we have never been able to ascertain what it is that has parted them."

This was all the information which Hermina could gain concerning the history of her aunt; and her curiosity, of course, was only excited still more keenly to find the clue to the mystery. Curiosity, however, soon changed into a feeling of the deepest sympathy when she came to live with her aunt, and was under the immediate influence of her calm and sincerely pious mind; but never would she have presumed to allude to the subject.

Aunt Mary had not deceived herself with regard to the state of her health; her constitution was broken, and her life wasting in a slow decline. Her strength at last failed so much, that she was no longer able to leave her bed. Hermina entirely and exclusively claimed for herself the dear and sacred office of nursing her beloved aunt. Thus aunt and

niece were drawn to each other more and more closely; and the young, affectionate girl, seemed to afford to Mary what had been denied to her in this life—a mother's happiness.

It was the beginning of autumn, the season which so severely tries invalids of that description. The still and silent hour of evening was approaching. Hermina sat by the bedside of her aunt watching her features with a look of tender anxiety. Mary opened her half-closed eyes, and said:

"My dear child, have you written to the professor?"

"Yes, dear aunt, immediately when you desired me to do so."

"It is well, my dear; I think he will soon be here," said her aunt, with a sweet smile.

Hermina's eyes were filling with tears; her heart was so full that she could no longer keep silence. For the first time she ventured to say,

"Dearest aunt, if you rejoice so much in the mere prospect of seeing him, why, oh! why?——You would have surely made him so happy!"

Mary, gently laying her hand on the head of the weeping maiden, said,

"Dear child, I have not many days to live; you have been so kind and affectionate to me, that I do not like the thought of leaving you with the idea that I am strange and capricious. I will tell you what I have revealed to no one. Come nearer, my child, for I cannot speak so loud, and move the lamp a little further away.

"Hermina, I was still a child when I thus sat by my mother's deathbed as you sit by me now. Alas! my all died with my mother. I was overwhelmed with grief. I thought by my fervent prayers to wrest her from heaven. No one but herself was able to soothe my anguish. In that night she spoke to me long and affectionately, and directed me to that firm and living faith which had been through life her chief source of happiness and comfort. But my grief could not be subdued, and I cried:

"'Mother, dear mother! how can I follow your pious example and become good without you? Promise me that you will come down from heaven to visit me.'

"'Child,' she solemnly replied, 'you know not what you ask; such is not the will of God; God has vouchsafed us light enough to guide us in our path. But I promise you,' she added, with a wonderfully clear and impressive voice, 'if God permits, I will come to you *when your soul is in danger!*' These were her last words."

The aunt rested a little while, and then, occasionally pausing as she grew tired—

"Hermina," she continued, "I loved Ludwig devotedly, more than I can tell. I knew that he did not quite share my faith. I was grieved, but I did not, therefore, think of giving him up. He was a noble-minded man—I trusted to the power of love. I had hoped that God would guide him, through me, to a knowledge of the true faith. But, my dear child, that is more difficult than you would believe. Ludwig is a man of brilliant talent and highly cultivated mind; the views of a man whom we love exercise a wonderful influence over us. I did not avoid conversation on the most sacred of all concerns, being so anxious to convert him to the true faith. His peculiar views, which he himself designated as 'the spirit of Christianity,' gradually gained ground in my heart. I believed Ludwig, as long as I heard him; when I was alone, *I felt* his words were not the words of truth: but the bright star of faith which

had hitherto guided me was now obscured. I could no longer look up like a child to my heavenly Father. I often felt very, very unhappy; but it never occurred to me to give up Ludwig. On that evening I told him all that grieved and agitated my heart. He remained calm and composed; he proved to me that the point of view at which I had then arrived was but one of transition to the perfect knowledge of truth. Once more he displayed to me the whole system of his philosophic views with his usual brilliant eloquence. I no longer remember all his arguments: I was carried away, I was convinced, I believed him. A new life lay open before me in the service of the Eternal Spirit. I was elated, I felt new vigour of life within me. In the solitude of my chamber I still was under the spell of his words. Hermina, in that night my mother kept her word—from that moment my duty became clear to me. As his wife I should not have been able to keep true to my own faith, and——I severed the tie! He exhausted all his arts of persuasion; he promised never to allude again to the subject; but, alas! I well knew that *the* quiet influence of example is often more powerful than an open attack against which we are on our guard. My path was clear before me, and God has been gracious to me. Of all prayers which since then I have offered up at the Throne of Mercy, my first, my last, and my most fervent, has not yet been granted. Ludwig is as truthful to me as to himself. If heaven could be purchased by a lie, he would not consent. And now, my dear child, good night."

On the following day there came a letter. Mary's eyes beamed with joy as she perused it.

"He has not yet received the letter which you wrote in my name, Hermina, but he will soon be here."

The sisters came to see Mary. She took an affectionate farewell of them, but did not wish them to remain with her. She was calm and resigned, and a sweet smile animated her face as if she anticipated *some* great joy. At last a carriage drove up: the professor sprang out.

"Is she still alive?" he asked, in breathless anxiety.

"Thanks to God!" he exclaimed, when Hermina answered in the affirmative.

He then hurried to the bedside of his friend. They had been together a long time before Hermina ventured to enter. Ludwig was on a chair close by the bedside of Mary, who sat upright, with her head leaning on his breast, while she gazed upon him with a look of unspeakable happiness. Their clasped hands rested on Mary's Bible, the most precious inheritance of her beloved mother.

Hermina was timidly retracing her steps, when Mary kindly beckoned to her, and said, with a faint voice,

"Thank God, my child, my prayer has been heard; my offering has not been in vain."

These were almost her last words. While she lived, Ludwig remained with her. They both received the sacrament, and she expired with a happy smile. Her features in death looked quite angelic—as lovely as when she was a happy affianced bride, though somewhat paler.

The Quiet House has been closed; it may one day be re-opened, to be the scene of noise and frolic; but those who knew its sweet and gentle inmate will ever consider it a hallowed spot for her sake.

U G L I N E S S.

BY MATTHEW LYNCH.

No man should be annoyed at being, what is termed, ugly; considering a handsome man one on whom we must look with a species of contempt, as it were, that he is putting the face in antagonism with the mind. In females, we look for beautiful countenances, as being on a par with, and in likeness to, their gentleness of mind. Men are the trees and women the flowers of human life. With the stately oak, we associate no idea of beauty—but we do one of grandeur, sublimity, or awfulness; and with the flower, the idea of the beautiful naturally mixes in our minds. We never speak of a giant, or noble-looking man, as being beautiful. Yet in speaking of a fine female, we will pronounce her as being so; and a child is not inappropriately styled a beautiful one, be it boy or girl. Of little girls the poet thus prettily speaks:

'With rosy cheeks, and merry dancing curls,
And eyes of tender light,
Oh! very beautiful are little girls,
And goodly to the sight.

The famous politician, Wilkes, was an extremely ugly man, and he is reported as having said that in female society his ugliness was to him only a drawback for fifteen minutes in contest for sway over the minds of the females constituting it with the handsomest man. What then must have been his triumphant career over these subsequent to the fifteen minutes' lapse? That ugly men should be successful in winning the regards of females may be attributed to their not being on their guard against the advances of the ugly fellows, as they will be against those of the handsome men. They leave open to the ugly men the batteries of their hearts; and, in consequence, they march into these citadels of love, and take possession of them. And an ugly man, with the female, has nothing to rely upon but his tongue, consequently care is taken by him of its pouring forth words of strength towards winning her regard; whilst the handsome man, in society of the female, drawls out his words in her hearing, relying upon his good looks gaining a mastery over her heart. Did not Othello, black as he was, win the heart of the beautiful Desdemona? She thus speaks of his conquest of her heart:

My heart's subdued,
Even to the very quality of my lord:
I saw Othello's visage in his mind.

Beauty is a relative quality of the human countenance. In Spain, red-haired men are prized most by the Spanish females. In Africa, one of our pale-cheeked fair beauties, of fragile form, would be looked upon as no object of delightful observation by an African Adonis; and even for eating he would not view her with respect. The writer was told a story, by a facetious friend of his, of a man being considered the handsomest one of one village, and finding himself on reaching the next one an object of abhorrence to its inhabitants on account of his ugliness, and to so great an extent that they immediately expelled him from its pre-

cincts, in consequence of his being so hideously ugly to their eyesight. It is likely a black man would view a female of fair countenance with less loving eyes than he should a sable one. Every husband considers his wife the handsomest of women. That the quality of the beauty of the human countenance is relative, is proved from the facts of the same face appearing to our sight at one time handsome, whilst at another period it will be viewed by us as an ugly one. In the case of the late great orator, R. L. Sheil, Professor Wilson (in the "Noctes Ambrosiæ" of *Blackwood*) thus alludes to his face, from ugliness brightening into beauty, as he proceeded into the impetuosity of eloquence:

"*Tickler*. He's another of your little fellows, but not in the least like either Lord Johnny, or Jeffrey, or Macaulay. A more insignificant person, as to the bodily organ, I never set spectacles on. Small of the smallest in stature, shabby of the shabbiest in attire, fidgety and tailor-like in gesture, in gait shambling and jerking—with an invisible nose, huge nostrils, a cheesy complexion, and a Jewish chin. You would say it was impossible that anything worth hearing could come from such an abortion. Nor do the first notes redeem him. His voice is as hoarse as a deal-board, except when it is as piercing as the rasp of a gimlet; and of all the brogues I have heard, his is the most abominable—quite of the sunk area school. But never mind, wait a little, and this vile machinery will do wonders.

"*North*. We can wait. Fill your glass.

"*Tickler*. To make some amends for her carelessness to all other external affairs, nature has given him as fine a pair of eyes as ever graced human head—large, deep-set, dark, liquid, flashing like gems; and these fix you, presently, like a basilisk, so that you forget everything else about him; and, though it would be impossible to conceive anything more absurdly ungraceful than his action—sharp, sudden jolts and shuffles, and right-about twists and leaps, all set to a running discord of grunts and screams—yet, before he has spoken ten minutes, you forget all this, too, and give yourself up to what I have always considered a pleasant sensation—the feeling, I mean, that you are in the presence of a man of genius."

The ugly man's face, being lighted up by the fire of genius, may present to a fair listener of its owner's conversation one of surpassing beauty. The handsome man is always so. It is a relief to the fair gazers on his perpetual beauty being presented with the honest ugly face of the plain-visaged man. An American lady thus sensibly proclaimed the feasibility of an ugly man winning a fair one's heart:

"Begging your pardon, Solomon, that's a great mistake. It is quite unessential that a man should he 'handsome.' Let him pray the gods, in the first place, to make him a gentleman—a gentleman at home as well as abroad. Let him stipulate for a fine figure and courtly manner, and leave it to their discretion after that to shape his eyes, nose, and mouth, provided they don't make them hideous. Save us from your plaid-painted, border-vested, big-cravated, moustached, Cologne-sprinkled, bejewelled, brainless exquisite. Give us a well-informed, plainly-dressed, self-possessed, intelligent, masculine, perfectly at home on all subjects, foreign and domestic—neither cringing to the great nor opposing the little—who puts one hand on his sword and the other on his heart, when a woman's name is mentioned—who raises no blush on the cheek of humble

innocence—who holds in contempt no living thing that God has made—who can pity the weak and erring without a pharisaical reviling—who can argue without loss of temper and dignity—who scorns a bribe or an oath—who has an arm for trembling age, a smile for prattling infancy, and a strong, brave heart for the oppressed and defenceless. But a 'pretty man, a pink-and-white Sir Brainless,' the united work of a tailor, hatter, shoemaker, and perfumer! Heaven save the mark! Women know better."

A handsome man is like to a garden, requiring constant care; beautiful to look at, but of little value. But the ugly man is similar to the rugged scene of nature, wherein rivers, mountains, and fields, redolent of plenty and health, present themselves to our view. Is not the little daisy of our fields, in its whiteness and peachy blush, far more beautiful in our sight than will be the most gorgeous flower of the conservatory? There is beauty in simplicity.

Some of our greatest men were, and are, in the erroneous sense of the term ugly, extremely so. Curran was indeed not handsome! with a nose not of beauty, but he possessed an eye of fire. He wooed and won the heart of a beautiful woman; who, alas! was stolen from him by a trusted friend. Lord Brougham is considered as a very ugly man, still he has always been a favourite amongst the fair sex. Sheil, ugly as he was, would be popular in female society. Poor Goldsmith, though so extremely ugly as he was, possessed the admiration and devoted love of an amiable and beautiful girl. David Hume, the historian, in Parisian female society shone, though possessed of a very inferior face. Doctor Johnson, an out-and-out ugly man, was a great favourite amongst the fair sex. Women admire men who possess good hearts and cultivated minds, careless of their having beautiful faces. Jealousy, arising from excessive love, is entertained to a greater extent by wives towards ugly husbands than against handsome-faced ones. So ugly of all men possess the most loving wives. See Milton, the handsomest man of his day, was unfortunate in matrimony; *likely* his beauty destroyed the power of his genius towards winning the hearts of his wives. A woman in America said she would marry a certain man, though he was so extremely ugly that she should cry out every time she looked at him.

Women are delighted in being beautiful, as they are desirous of sway over the hearts and minds of the male sex. Even the beauty of women resides not in men's minds on the exterior face, but in their genius. Sir Henry Raeburn says, "No woman's face is worth anything if it can be put upon canvas." Pope says:

> What's female beauty, but an air divine
> Through which the mind's all gentle graces shine?
> They, like the sun, irradiate all between;
> The body charms, because the soul is seen.
> Hence, men are often captives of a face
> They know not why, of no peculiar grace;
> Some forms, though bright, no mortal man can bear;
> Some none resist, tho' not exceeding fair.

And Abelard would seem as conveying an outward want of beauty in Eloise, in describing her as "in facie non infima." Longfellow would seem as recognising the intellectuality of female beauty in making

Fleming, in Hyperion, thus speak of the landlady's daughter:—"She was a beautiful girl of sixteen, with black hair, and dark, lovely eyes, and a face that had a story to tell. How different faces are in this particular! Some of them speak not. They are books in which not a line is written, save, perhaps, a date. Others are great family bibles, with both the Old and New Testament written in them. Others are Mother Goose and nursery tales; others bad tragedies, or pickle-herring farces; and others, like that of the landlady's daughter at the Star, sweet love-anthologies, and songs of the affections."

Beauty in the material world would seem as not an appendage of the most worthy specimens of creation; as, for instance, we find the most beautiful birds are comparatively useless and without song. In the writer's mind, the simple flowers are the prettiest ones. And shrubs and trees, in simplicity of colour and form, would arrest the attention of the poetic-minded observer of nature with more pleasure arising in his mind, than more complexly-formed and coloured ones could in viewing bring to it. In nature, there exists the grand and simple; the one leads to sublimity, the other to the beautiful. Grandeur in nature, in her works and operations, is always associated in our minds with largeness or loudness. The lofty mountain capped with snow, or covered with lofty verdure, is an object of grandeur to the eye of its observer. The mighty sea, dashing its briny waves upon the shore, fills our minds, in our viewing it, with immortal thoughts, grand, solemn, and breast calming. The artillery of heaven heard rolling its dread thunder over our heads conveys to our minds ideas of grandeur and sublimity. But in looking at a simple flower, we associate in doing so in our minds with it an idea of the beautiful. The lion, large and strong, is an object of grandeur to our sight; the deer, fragile and swift, is one to it of simplicity and beauty. There is a poetry in nature which causes our minds associating ideas of beauty with simplicity. And in the human race the poetry of it is associated in men's mind with ideas of simplicity. Hence the idea of manly beauty is raised in the female on the foundation of simplicity, or, in other words, genius. And allow the writer to say, readers, in his esteem for ugliness of face, to proclaim that the unspoiled beautiful women are the rightful spoils of the cultivated and amiable ugly men. It would seem but right that ugly men should be husbands to handsome women, in order to keep up in the world the balance of appearance.

END OF VOL. XXVI.

C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.